MADAME DE LAFAYETTE AND HER FAMILY

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HUGUENOT HISTORICAL SOCIETY,
NEW PALTZ, N. Y.

MADAME DE LAFAYETTE

AND HER FAMILY

ADRIENNE DE NOAILLES

MARQUISE DE LA FAYETTE

After a miniature in the possession of the FAMILY

MADAME DE LAFAYETTE AND HER FAMILY

BY

M. MacDERMOT CRAWFORD

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Dedicated to

C. A. C.

HUGUENOT HISTORICAL SOCIETY,

Preface

FROM the memoirs, real and fictitious, written in such profusion during the last days of Royal France, one is apt to form, in judging the character of the *grande dame* of that period, an erroneous estimate, and to forget that there existed other and nobler women than those celebrated for extravagance and intrigue: hundreds to whom the salons of Versailles were preferably *terra incognita*. Of this latter type was the wife of Lafayette.

Aside from the prominent part she played, no woman of the Revolution possesses a more interesting personality than Adrienne de Noailles. "She was," wrote the Count de Ségur, "a model of heroism. She was one of the few whose unsullied reputation received new lustre from the misfortunes of the Revolution."

During the stormy days of the Terror the position of Mme. de Lafayette was one of extreme danger. Only the constant, frantic efforts of her friends and the repeated appeals of the American minister saved her from that tragic guillotine where, within the hour, mother, sister, and grandmother perished.

Young and enthusiastic, she encouraged in Lafayette those republican tendencies which, bitterly opposed by their relatives, cost them at a later date so dearly. Stifling her heartache, she sped the husband on that hazardous voyage across distant seas to aid the great cause of liberty in far-off America—a land, as her quaint letters to Washington show, she always loved and longed to visit.

The wife of Lafayette rests to-day by the side of

her famous husband in that forgotten cemetery of Picpus, a pathetic "God's Acre" in the heart of careless Paris. One hundred years have elapsed since her death. Time has effaced every trace of the beautiful garden wherein as a child she played. The "vast" *Hôtel de Noailles* is a tale of by-gone days, and her Paris is fast passing. But the memory of Adrienne de Noailles must always live in the hearts of those who, now a great nation, were only a band of struggling patriots when Lafayette espoused their cause. Womanlike, she loved that cause—because him she loved loved it.

M. MacD. C.

PARIS, *June* 19, 1907.

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MADAME DE LAFAYETTE AND HER FAMILY

CHAPTER I

IN this day, when the white light of historical research has fallen on even the most obscure characters, bringing into prominence those details which, for the sake of bygone reputations, were better deep buried in the past of the oblivion, it is more than remarkable that the wife of that world-renowned man, the Marquis de Lafayette, should remain practically unknown. Had she been one of those "fair, frail women," an extravagant mistress, whose slender fingers meddled in the skein of political intrigue, we should know her intimately merely from her connection with so famous a character. The most trivial details of her personality would be at our tongues' end—her preferred colour, the perfume which wafted from her silken skirts, and long ago we should have been possessed of that intimate knowledge which we have gleaned anent the various ladies of that epoch. Being his wife, the mother of his children, she is, to the present generation, hidden by the mists of indifferent obscurity. By her contemporaries, Adrienne de Noailles, Marquise de Lafayette, was known and highly esteemed for the qualities which made her stand first among those of her day as a pure and undefiled type of the finest womanhood. It is sad that a woman of such noble character, intrepidity of action and spirit, such dauntless courage, should be forgotten in the hundred years which have passed since she breathed her last.

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France had no finer blood than that flowing in her veins. She came of a long line of ancestors, on both sides noted for their services to king and country. Her courtesy, fearlessness, and pride of birth showed the blood of the Noailles; her sweetness of disposition, unselfishness, lack of ostentation, and passionate love of husband and children were the characteristics of her mother, Henriette d'Agusseau, daughter of the famous chancellor. From the chancellor came that calm, well-balanced mind, the result of generations of legal training. Indeed, in most traits she favoured the distaff side of the family. She was unselfish to the point of self-immolation—a characteristic not obtrusive in the family of de Noailles—and, withal, had that fearlessness which, even at the steps of the scaffold, made her refuse to forswear those principles professed by her husband which had cost her so dearly. The love which she bore her husband stands "seldom equalled, never excelled," in the annals of devotion, declared Fox. In every breath she drew was displayed that wonderful, unfaltering adherence to his cause which made her loyally and intrepidly, in those terrible days when the name of Lafayette was a death warrant in itself, begin all her petitions with the bold words: "La femme Lafayette."

Of her immediate maternal ancestors, her great-grandfather, the chancellor, Henri d'Agusseau, was the most famous for the part which he played in the affairs of the Regency. Born in 1668—a year remarkable, among other things, for the conclusion of the Triple Alliance between England, Holland, and Sweden, brought about by the offense given by the pompous Louis to the rest of Europe; and, more locally, the establishment of a Supreme Court of Judicature at Tournay, which in 1686 "was erected into a Parliament." At this time also was the fourteenth Louis at the zenith of his arrogant splendour — his court the cynosure of the world.

HENRY FRANÇOIS DAGUESSEAU
Ne le 27. Novembre 1668. Chancelier de France
le 2. Février 1717. mort le 9. Février 1751. a 82. ans
2. mois 12. jours.

HENRY FRANCOIS DAGUESSEAU

GREAT-GRANDFATHER OF MME. DE LAFAYETTE

From a print in the collection of the author

D'Agusseau's father, the great-great-grandfather of Mme. de Lafayette, was Councillor of State and Intendant of Languedoc at the time of his son's birth. He possessed such influence with the king that his son was appointed, at the unprecedented age of twenty-two and a half years, to be one of the three Avocats Général, the eloquence of his maiden speech making him famous ere the concluding periods had fallen from his lips. He justified the brilliance of his first appearance—in 1700 being made Procureur Général; Chancellor, and Keeper of the Seals in 1717, at the age of forty-eight. Among the wild excesses of the day he remained unscathed, remarkable for the purity of his life, preferring the society of the grave and educated few to the rabble surrounding the Regent. Boileau and Racine were two of his most cherished companions.

In his office of Procureur Général, d'Agusseau gained immense popularity with the masses by the justice and leniency he displayed in criminal cases and for his strictly conscientious and honest care and administration of the public hospitals under his charge. He was held in high esteem by the Regent, probably from the fact of his incorruptibility and absolute refusal to act in a manner opposed to his conscience and ideas of right and wrong—a trait seldom found in those surrounding Philippe d'Orléans. D'Agusseau was stubbornly opposed to the projects of the famous Law, who had artfully filled the mind of the greedy regent with tales of untold gold. Being made chancellor in 1717, his position enabled him to place before his master the consequences which must follow such schemes, though even he never dreamed of the scenes of frenzied excitement later to be enacted by the mad populace of Paris. He would not be cajoled into approval, and, after several stormy interviews with the regent, was deprived of the seals of his office, and banished by that bewitched individual to his country seat at Fresnes. His recall, five years later, is said to have been due to the influence

of Law and Cardinal Fleury, but that and the remainder of his life is too well known to necessitate description or comment.

Of the five years of his banishment, filled with research and study, he always spoke with the greatest pleasure. He was able to devote much time to his favourite occupation of gardening, and lived the life of a simple country gentleman, surrounded by his family and friends. Once freed " from the madding crowd," he did not sigh for the position which had been his. Philosophically he sat in patriarchal state, watching the follies which his wise brain had predicted; grieved that his countrymen should be as imbecile children in the hands of the Scotch adventurer. He studied, read, and compared the Scriptures in many languages; made deep researches into the jurisprudence of his own and other countries, a matter which had always been of the most profound interest to him, though one, to which until now, he had never been able to devote much time. Thirteen volumes come to us comprising his works, mostly on legal subjects. His lighter hours were filled with literature and the study of philosophy. On his recall to office, he laboured and did much to adjust the laws prevailing in different parts of France, so that a uniform code should be used at all courts and trials. As a magistrate, he was so conscientious that St. Simon complains he spent too much time over the cases which came before him! Legal France owes inestimable benefit to his labours, what he did being invaluable to the fraternity, and causing him to rank with Lemoigne and L'Hôpital in his achievements.

He retained his rank of chancellor until his death in 1750, though he had relinquished his duties the preceding year. His good qualities seem to have been transmitted to his descendants in a conspicuous degree, their history forming a sharp contrast to the majority of the families of the day and generation. He had several sisters who married well, but possess little interest

now, not being noted in one way or another. It was his son, Jean Baptist d'Agusseau de Fresnes, who, in the year 1736, married the lovely and gentle Anne-Louise Françoise Dupré, "Dame de La Grange-Bleneau-en-Brie," grandmother to Mme. de Lafayette. The union was conducted with sufficient pomp and ceremony; was happy, too, during the brief time it lasted, for, alas! the following year the poor young wife died, leaving in her place a tiny girl, who was later Duchesse d'Ayen, mother of Mme. de Lafayette. Until she was three years old Henriette lived under the care of her grandparents, and there is nothing of interest to chronicle but the usual catalogue of infantile ailments and the consequent lustily yelled protest when retribution, in the form of a noxious dose, overtook the rebellious patient.

Her father, a year after the death of his wife, remarried, and, being for the second time a widower, again submitted to the matrimonial yoke. He might without exaggeration be termed a much married man, though the cares and worries of the holy state of matrimony fretted him little, and he died at a ripe old age, surrounded and regretted by his numerous descendants, among whom were a son, afterwards *sénateur et pair de France*, member of the *Academie Française*, who died in 1826, and two daughters. One, Angélique Françoise Rosalie, married Bouchard de Saron, later *premier président du Parlement de Paris*; the other, Claire Geneviève Pauline, became the wife of M. de Ségur, well known in the world of diplomacy and art.

The first child, Henriette, was of a curious and most precocious disposition. At the age of three she was sent, with her devoted nurse, to the *Couvent du Visitation de Saint Denis*, there being under the particular and especial care of one of the nuns, Mme. de Hericourt, a woman of rarely extraordinary charm of manner, blended with gentle determination of character. The little orphan was much petted by the good Sisters, but the judicious care of Mme. de Hericourt and the

watchful jealousy of her nurse kept the sweetness of her disposition from becoming spoiled by excessive adulation. Of Mme. de Hericourt, Mme. de Lafayette wrote later that she possessed rare talent for education, " and knew how to make virtue attractive to her pupils. But toward virtue my mother's heart was naturally inclined," she continues, " and to its practice she applied herself from her earliest childhood with that rectitude which was her special characteristic; so much so, that with an irresolute though superior mind, with a physical and mental inclination to be alarmed and troubled in all circumstances, this disquietude and anxiety could be traced to one sole cause superior to all others. To her always could be applied the words of Psalm cxix: ' My soul is continually in my hand, yet do I not forget thy law '; such were the feelings of my mother's heart."

" From her earliest years the integrity of her heart united with the sterling qualities of her mind to give an excellent foundation to her education." She read much, and books which would have been beyond the comprehension and liking of the average child. She was very religious, and once, when scarcely more than five years old, finding a volume of " Les Pères du Désert," unlike most children, who would have been amused with the visions it contained, she became greatly terrified that, should she become too great a saint, she might be seized with similar hallucinations! She showed from her earliest childhood a marked character, and, though brought up in and knowing no other sphere than the strict convent with its daily routine and all-pervading religious atmosphere, never became then or at any time in after life, even in the faintest degree, bigoted in matters of religion. She was a true and earnest Christian, and as such, beyond the petty distinctions, the narrowness of creed and dogma.

She cared little for riches, and, on receiving a very considerable property on the death of her maternal

grandfather, earnestly begged that it should be charged with sufficient legacies to diminish its value. Whether or not the less benevolent guardians of the generous young woman took this rather unusual view of the matter, history does not say, but it is more than probable that they put in a place of safety and carefully husbanded the wealth of the deceased M. Dupré until such time as his granddaughter became legally its mistress. This happened just after she had been taken from the convent to live permanently with her father and stepmother, Mme. de Fresnes, to whom she became deeply attached. She was at this time in the constant care of her governess, and faithful friend in after life, Mlle. Aufroy, and very busy completing her education, the religious portion of which was under the celebrated *curé* of St. Paul. For the next four years she lived the quiet, uneventful life of a French girl of her day. Her disposition was cheerful and happy, full of natural gaiety. She played with her pets, worked a piece of impossible embroidery, performed upon the harpsichord with more than indifferent skill, and took some pleasure in learning the latest *minuet de la Cour*. Happy for her that in the fearful events of her later life she was able to gain a few minutes' retrospective pleasure amid the horrors surrounding her! She passed much time in devotion and in acts of charity to the poor people on the estate, to whom she dispensed alms mingled with gentle admonition. She preferred to live in the country, sharing the hobby of her grandfather, the chancellor, with whom she passed many hours at Fresnes, pottering about in those gardens of which he was so fond and proud. His death, which happened when she was thirteen, was a great shock to her excitable religious temperament. Some of the letters passing between Henriette and the chancellor, written between 1743–47, are still in existence, or, at least, copies of them, showing how her mind, even at that tender age, was taken up and employed in serious reading.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to find details of her marriage in 1755, when, on the fifth day of January, she wedded Jean Paul François, Duc d'Ayen, after the death of his father in 1793, Duc de Noailles. He was born on the sixteenth of October, 1739, being thus nearly two years her junior, and lived until 1824, having managed to escape from France during the Terror. They were a happy couple, and she was tenderly attached to him; living after their marriage at the Hôtel de Noailles, in the rue St. Honoré, the Paris home of the family, where that patriarch, Adrien, second Maréchal de Noailles, gathered round him each year all the living members of the family.

Though the society of the day was as brilliant and entertainingly wicked as heart could wish, and the rank of her husband's family, and his intimacy at court made it almost unheard of, young Mme. de Noailles lived a life of nunlike seclusion. The health and recluse habits of her mother-in-law were ill adapted for gaiety, and the bride only went to court for her presentation, or on a few formal occasions. Not so M. le Duc d'Ayen. He differed from the rest of the family, and, while Henriette pursued her domestic occupations under the sheltering wing of her father and mother-in-law, he danced attendance on the monarch and the gorgeous throng surrounding him. It is a matter for conjecture that perhaps the young Duchesse d'Ayen would have been wiser had she followed more intimately the pursuits and inclinations of her husband.

She was one of those to whom the pleasures of the imagination were more enjoyable than the actual happenings of everyday life. Affairs outside her little circle presented no temptation, and when a butterfly friend dropped in brimming with the latest gossip, a vagary more than heretofore wanton, of la Dubarri or her predecessors, a surmise as to the probable successor, a new *bon mot*, Mme. d'Ayen breathed a silent breath of thankful relief—after the visitor had departed—that

of necessity her career was not that of her friend. Her life was at once lofty and introspective; her ideas very peculiar, her prejudices strong. Sheltered by the history-stained walls of the Hôtel de Noailles, she passed the first two years after her marriage. At the end of this time a son was born.

Describing her after this happening, Adrienne says: "The fervour of her first maternal passion was greater than can be imagined," and yet, when twelve months later her idolized son died, her faith in Heaven was so great that, "absorbed in the thought of her child's eternal bliss, she says that she often found herself believing that there was no greater saint in heaven." That the heir of the Noailles was no more meant little to her; she cared nothing for worldly pomp and state, and her child was now beyond temptation.

To follow in detail all the trivial events of her life at this period would be tedious and uninteresting. What must be borne in mind is that she was a woman of extraordinary character, strictly truthful, sincere, and, before all, naturally religious, but not in the faintest degree bigoted or intolerant of others. She possessed the most passionate love for her children and relatives, even to the most remote degrees. These latter were her most strongly marked traits. She was "tenderly attached to her husband," but he was more than secondary to her children and family.

She had, in course of time, four daughters: Louise, afterwards married to her cousin, the Vicomte de Noailles, born November 11, 1758, and her mother's "greatest comfort"; Adrienne, Mme. de Lafayette, born November 2, 1759; Mme. de Thesan, 1763, who was the first of that devoted family to pass from this world; and Pauline, 1766, married to the Marquis de Grammont. It was a grief, renewed at the birth of each little girl, that there was yet no heir to bear the proud old title. But, resigned to a divine will, Mme. d'Ayen was utterly happy in the society of these merry little

girls, to whose care and education she devoted herself, heart and soul. No slight task, for the four minds were very dissimilar in their tastes; though, even at that early age, remarkable for that wonderful love of each other which so distinguished them in after life. The simple, healthy existence they led might have been that of the humblest *bourgeoisie*. Their mother was the soul, the embodiment of domesticity, and perhaps it is due to this fact that she did not have much of the society of her husband; for, as she confessed in after life, she somewhat neglected *les moyens de plaire*, which would have made her personality and society more necessary to the duc. There was fault on both sides: on one, the fault of too much goodness; on the other, a nature better tuned to the airs of court life than those of the simple home melody. The more sceptical and not devout mind of the duc was inclined to attribute sundry suggestions and wishes of his wife to the promptings of the clergy and her confessor; this he resented, and consequently a slight barrier grew between them, restricting the intimacy of everyday life, though in any matter of importance he was always at the call of Mme. d'Ayen.

Her promising little family of four, from ten years of age to the infant scarce five, was brought up in her own company, under her constant care and supervision, very unusual for the children of a great family in those days, as was the education they received—part of which was entrusted to Mlle. Marin, but mostly directed and in every detail overlooked by their mother. They were taught to dictate letters before they were able to read or write. They learned the "Petit Catéchism de Fleury," and the "Grand Catéchism" of the same author; an abridgment of the Old Testament, and the "Éléments de Géographie," which they studied on the map; the "Magasin des Enfants," and a great many stories from mythology were read to them by their mother. Strange as it may seem, they were never told any fairy tales or ghost stories, such as form the food

of most infant minds. Anecdotes from the Old Testament, little stories of the trivial happenings in the convent where Mme. d'Ayen had passed her childhood, related by her old nurse, served to amuse them and passed the play hours of these easily pleased little people. It was a most unusual education in more ways than one, especially for that day and generation. A vein of mental indolence in their mother prevented her ever being " too thorough in what she undertook." She possessed " much vivacity of disposition," allowed her children to argue and question, though not in a forward manner, and at one time remarked " that they were less obedient than most children of their age," to which Adrienne replied: " That may be, madame, because you allow us to argue and reason with you, but you shall see that at fifteen we shall be more obedient than other children."

" There was nothing absolute in her way of teaching, guiding, or correcting us; she thought she had done nothing when she had not thoroughly convinced the child she was speaking to, and, though she was naturally indolent and too little accustomed to repress the vivacity of her temper, she would listen to her children's reasonings with praiseworthy kindness. Her dislike for charlatanry and pedantry gave her, perhaps, too great a dislike for order and method; this was sometimes a cause of loss of time."

In 1768, that fearful scourge of the times, smallpox, laid Mme. d'Ayen low. For days her life was despaired of, and the birth of a son, while she was in this terrible condition, complicated matters to such a degree that, at times, the doctors would promise no hope of recovery. She suffered terribly, and the long-hoped-for and desired heir received but scant attention at the hands of his father, who scarcely left the bedside of his wife. She was not told the nature of her illness, and once expressing a wish to see her children, their father instantly had them brought to the bedside, though

they had never had the smallpox, and the risk they ran was appalling to contemplate. Luckily, the little ones suffered no ill effect. The pleasure of again seeing them cheered the sufferer, who from that time began to mend. The idea of death is a difficult one for the childish mind to grasp, and all the anxieties of their mother's nearly fatal illness made less impression on them than, when her convalescence allowed her to be moved, they saw her for the first time sitting in her window disfigured, as then were the victims of the disease, and were told that they would never see "*chère maman* as she used to be. . . ." "None of the misfortunes which have since befallen me have ever effaced the remembrance of our sorrow, at the thought that we should never see my mother as she had formerly been," Adrienne wrote at a later date.

It was the will of Heaven, and Mme. d'Ayen did not repine over her lost beauty, but devoted herself to the last born, whose arrival completed the family. She had never cared for the world and its gaieties, and the welfare and education of her children occupied her to the exclusion of all else. She was, indeed, a devoted mother.

In the summer they went, not half frequently enough from their point of view, to visit their grandfather, the Maréchal de Noailles, whose health obliged him to live most of the time at Saint Germain-en-Laye. He always received them with the most stately and cordial politeness, walked with them in the beautiful forest near by, which then existed in all its famed sylvan loveliness. "In the evening he cheerfully squandered time and money playing loto for their amusement." They often went on hilarious picnics to Meudon, rode donkeys as far as Mont Valerian, on which occasions those noble beasts of burden usually bore themselves with the stately grace and deliberation characteristic of their race. With her five charges—Mlle. Saron, the niece of Mme. d'Ayen, and the Mlles. Montmerail—Mlle. Marin had

her hands full. This excellent lady, " in full panoply," directed the cavalcade with the generalship of a *maréchal de camp*, though it must be admitted that her forces were not distinguished for their discipline and obedience. " She was a tiny person, blonde, pinched, touchy, and devoted to her duties, punctilious in their performance. Once mounted on her donkey, she absolutely lost her *sang froid*, and appeared so wild-eyed, scared, and so stiff that you could not look at her without being seized with an irrepressible desire for mirth, which made her angry; though what angered her the most was the peal of childish laughter greeting her ears when she tumbled off her steed, an acrobatic exhibition which she seldom failed to give at least once on each of these excursions. As the pace of her steed was not rapid, and she fell upon the grass, she sustained no injury, and the frolicsome squadron laughingly filed by her; and, did one of the riders pause to aid the mortified lady to rise, her sole recompense was ill humour and a scolding."

Once every year, in the autumn, did Mme. d'Ayen proceed with her numerous family and retinue to visit her father at Fresnes. These visits lacked the exuberance of those paid to the Maréchal de Noailles, as M. d'Agusseau was very deaf and very old, and, though a dear old gentleman, lacked the gaiety of heart which generally distinguished members of the family of Noailles. The atmosphere of Fresnes had always been scholastic, severe, and rather conventual in its routine, and it is probably to this early environment and training that Mme. d'Ayen owed her ideas of life and nunlike manner of living. But any severity which might have chilled the young children was dispelled by the devotion of the third wife of M. d'Agusseau, whom the children called " stepmother," or " grandmère," the relationship being somewhat nebulous owing to the frequent nuptials of this much married old gentleman. They paid visits to M. de Saron at Saron, and sometimes to other

relatives, but these visits were always brief, as Mme. d'Ayen did not like to be separated from those of her family who were too young to go, or, in the case of her husband's father, too old to travel. She was known to have possessed a great love for the country, which she always preferred to a town life, but some of the many scruples ever agitating her mind made her deny herself the pleasure of living among " green fields and pastures new." She was one of those women utterly miserable unless surrounded by family and relatives to every degree.

But the children did not suffer. Their life was one of mild and pleasant monotony. They had their little pleasures and amusements with the other children of their age, and were extraordinarily fond of playing in the beautiful gardens of the Hôtel de Noailles, one of the finest in Paris, celebrated for its marvellously kept flower beds, formal and prim, as the taste of the day demanded. Between these wound devious walks bordered with trim, clipped hedges and neat paths, an ideal spot for hide and seek. A stately flight of steps, thirteen in number, led from the house into this charming spot, and on either side three rows of trees threw the drowsy charm of their shadows upon those who dallied beneath their branches. At the foot of the garden stretched the magnificent vista of the Tuileries, and, where to-day the rush and never-ceasing stream of carriages flows to and fro on the rue de Rivoli, the garden wall bounded the promenade of those who walked in that stately garden. On the right was the famous convent of the Feuillans, where the unfortunate Louis and Marie Antoinette fled on that dreadful day when royalty fell.

How different is it all to-day! How few passing through this neighbourhood ever give even a thought to the memory of those who have lived and loved in those quaint courts, those narrow and stilted houses! Should the ghosts of past events gather in that tortuous

street where the pale wraith of Marie Antoinette is recalled by the sight of the busy *charettes,* once used for so sinister a purpose; where the bloodthirsty Jacobins conspired to ruin their country; where the cannons of young Bonaparte swept the rebellious citizens from the steps of Saint Roch; where ten thousand things have happened—what a concourse there would be as the " witching hour " rang from the storm-beaten bell which alone marks the flight of time: unchanged, indifferent!

At the beginning of the day Mme. d'Ayen's first care was for her children. Pausing each morning on her way to hear mass at the Jacobins' nearly opposite, she embraced them tenderly and listened to their eager prattle, for they never failed to place themselves in her path, and would every afternoon desert their play in the garden rather than miss their mother on her way to the church of Saint Roch. At three o'clock she dined with them, and, on the days when she did not attend mass, they followed her to her bedroom, a spacious apartment, " hung in crimson satin damask, embroidered in gold," and containing one of those awe-inspiring beds of the epoch.

" The duchesse usually seated herself in a large easy-chair (*bergère*) near the fireplace, having conveniently at hand her snuff-box and knitting and her books. The four daughters grouped themselves around her, the eldest occupying chairs, the younger ones stools, all disputing pleasantly for the coveted place near the *bergère.*" Of this time, Adrienne writes:

" My younger sisters did not see my mother at the same hours we did, and, notwithstanding the number of her children, each received the care and moral education which best suited her character. As for me, I can say that she always brought back within the bounds of reason my overexcited imagination; and though I must confess that my mother allowed me when I was a child to perceive her approbation too well, nevertheless she

knew how to correct my pride by expressing my faults in a manner so true and energetic that she would each time strike my heart to its inmost core."

Strange woman! from her phenomenally fertile imagination she derived more pleasure than if she had been an actor on the stage of that spectacular period! Expecting, through the goodness of her heart, similar traits in others, she, alas! but too often found the feet of her idols the most common clay. Alas, indeed! In common with those of her disposition, her judgment of the follies of her time was severe. "The sight of evil always pained her, but the sight of good filled her with profound joy."

MLLE. DE LA FAYETTE

From a rare print in the collection of the author

CHAPTER II

LOVING her children as she did, and never failing in wifely obedience, it seems strange that for many months Mme. d'Ayen utterly refused to listen to the prayers, the wishes, the entreaties of husband and relatives, and give her consent to the proposals of marriage, made on the part of M. de Lafayette by his guardian, M. de Ségur, for the hand of one of her daughters. When this proposition was made, "neither Louise nor Adrienne had reached twelve years of age."

Marie Jean Paul Roch Ives Motier, Marquis de Lafayette, came of a family honourably known in the history of his country. While perhaps not so powerful or prominent as the de Noailles, being less at court, and ever preferring the camp to a life of silken ease, they had long been marked for their bravery in battle, wisdom in council, and those principles of justice and right which they ever practised. As far back as the fourteenth century, the Sieurs Lafayette were distinguished for their justice and kindness to the peasants of their estates in Auvergne. They were hardy warriors, too, more than one leading the troops of his country to victory. In the reign of Charles VI, the Maréchal de Lafayette "defeated the Duke of Clarence, Lieutenant-General of Normandie at the Battle of Beauge" (1421), says the old chronicle. Of the women, much may be written. The first to appear prominently in the history of her times was Louise Angélique Motier de Lafayette, for a long time maid of honour to Anne of Austria, and — one says — greatly beloved by that

princess for her good sense and staunch fidelity, being a moral balance for the somewhat flighty, though beautiful, queen, whose love for adulation and flattery carried her beyond the bounds proscribed by court etiquette. In the many and oft-recurring disagreements between Anne and her peevish, jealous husband, Louis XIII—the silly son of a foolish mother—who was always inclined to listen to the slightest breath of gossip about his wife, with the charming trait of making mountains out of molehills, Louise often played the part of peacemaker, restoring the royal pair to harmony for the time being. Attracted by her good sense, outspoken candour, combined with an utter absence of servility, not to add the softening influence of her beauty, the king proceeded to fall in love with his wife's *dame d'honneur*. It is said that he expressed sentiments to Mlle. de Lafayette in which Cupid played more part than the platonic feelings of propriety demanded. Unlike her namesake of the following reign, Louise had no desire to be one of the jewels of her monarch's crown, and, resolutely declining the proffered devotion, in 1637 retired to the convent, and "no coaxings on the part of Anne of Austria, or entreaties from the king, could induce her to come back to the court."

Such is one story to account for her retirement from the world, but even the scandal-mongers of the court unite in admitting that *cette attache était tout dans l'esprit*, proving that the thirteenth Louis was not of the same temperament as his illustrious father! On looking deeper, one learns that Mlle. de Lafayette had influence with the monarch, whom she constantly urged to assert himself and throw off the yoke of Richelieu. To such a degree was she feared by the powerful minister that he finally obliged her, by his intrigues, to retire from the court with Mme. de Sancy, "who had been the confidant of this innocent passion."

There are many tales. Probably it was the case of the genie, who, after being released from his bottle,

grew to such terrifying proportions that his liberator trembled at the consequences which his action might entail! Louise had a very powerful following at the court. She was the daughter of Jean de Lafayette and his wife, Marguerite de Bourbon Busset, the latter a descendant *à la main gauche* of the Bourbon Montpensier. Her grandmother, a de Bourbon Busset, Mme. de Miosson, was the governess of Henri IV and the confidant of the poisoned Jeanne d'Albret, whose death, in its day, shook the courts of Europe with muttered scandal. The Bishop of Limoges was Louise's uncle; she was cousin german to the Marquise de Senèce, lady in waiting to the queen, and second cousin to the famous Capuchin, Joseph de Tremblay. The governess of the maids of honour, Mlle. de Polignac, was a near relative. It will be seen that in family influence at the court she far surpassed Mlle. de Hautefort, toward whom, previously, the temperate fancy of the king had been somewhat attracted. It was with the kind idea of replacing Mlle. de Hautefort, as inimical to his plans, that Monseigneur the Cardinal Richelieu first brought Louise definitely under the royal eye. Owing to the poverty of the family, and the impossibility of providing her with a marriage portion, Louise had, from her earliest childhood, been destined for the convent. She was a young person of the type sometimes described as "plump and pleasing," being a "brunette with shiny eyes, rather inclined to embonpoint in figure without much dignity of carriage; shy and sedate in manner and speech; given to sentiment, poetry, and meditation: and preferring a secluded life to courtly gayety." It was one evening, when seated beneath the becoming radiance of the wax lights, coaxing melody from the responsive strings of a harp, and singing one of those mediocre compositions, which it was the pride of the king to write and set to indifferent tunes, that the wily cardinal drew the attention of his master to the charms of the young maid of honour.

What more could the vanity of a king desire? Especially one so vain of his musical accomplishments as Louis? That Mlle. de Lafayette did not retire without due consideration we have proof. True to the traditions of her sex, Louise never remained in the same frame of mind for two days at a time. She was the shuttlecock of intrigue. Her relatives of all degrees opposing the plots of the cardinal, with counterplots *ad infinitum*. As for the king: "*Angélique était sa joie et sa couronne,*" and during those conversations which they had in a little room off the antechamber of the queen, he "begged her" to remain. But Louise was superstitious, and Mlle. Thommason, a "dresser to the queen," informed Carré "that Lafayette was suffering from agonies of indecision: dreading that some personal catastrophe might befall her!" Every little vexatious incident was now interpreted as a sign of divine wrath at her indecision. "For instance, this morning Lafayette came into my apartment," says Thommason, "And said that God drew her to a religious life, by inflicting on her countless little mortifications; she then showed me a little pimple which had appeared on her right cheek during the night, 'As a sign,' she said, 'that God is displeased at my delay.'" That was the end! Feminine vanity proved more powerful than the contradictory pleadings of king, cardinal, and relatives: the fate of Louise was sealed!

It may be that when Mlle. de Lafayette found that her influence with the king was not so powerful that he would, at her bidding, free himself from the thrall of his eminence, she developed scruples of conscience and retired from the world. At any rate, even from the convent, she was a source of trouble to the cardinal, who accusing her confessor, Père Caussin, of still urging her to intrigue against him, as he had done while at court, had the worthy Caussin banished to lower Brittany, where he was beyond the circle of the court and its influences. The details of the intrigues used by

the powerful minister are not all recorded, but an old writer tells that "When Father Caussin, the Confessor of the King, asked, 'on the part of Mlle. de Lafayette, the permission of the King to retire to a convent,' the King was very much upset; he cried, and complained that she should wish to leave him; but afterward his great piety made him appreciate her motives, and he said: 'She is my well beloved, but if God calls her to a religious life, I shall place no obstacle in her way.'" So Louise bade farewell to her monarch, and lived for the next twenty-seven years in the odour of sanctity, dying, in 1665, at the convent which she had founded at Chaillot. Much to the disgust of the cardinal, Louis had gone several times to the convent in the disguise of a private gentleman, accompanied by one of his trusted attendants, to confide in the ear of Louise his petty troubles, and to ask her advice, for she possessed a love of truth, pleasing to the king, and equally dreaded by the cardinal. Their interviews were usually conducted in the presence of a third party, who remained out of earshot, and, consequently, through his spies, the cardinal became aware of what was going on. His anger was unbounded, and he immediately remonstrated with the king on the scandal of his clandestine visits to the convent. Thus did the wily schemer overreach himself, for "one wet and stormy day in the month of December, 1637, Louis XIII threw all the gossips and scandal-mongers into greater perplexity and confusion than the city had known since the days of the League . . . in the full pomp of royalty, escorted by his guards and attended by his favourite courtiers, Louis drove leisurely through the Faubourg Saint Antoine toward the Convent of Saint Mary of the Visitation. . . . It was, however, the unforeseen result of his (the Cardinal's) machinations; he had sent the King an intercepted letter from the Queen to some member of her family; and as France was then at war with Spain, the Cardinal

wished to fix on the Queen the guilt of corresponding with the enemies of the Kingdom. Alarmed and perplexed, the King resolved to consult her in whom he reposed the most confidence; but fearing some attempt at assassination (a peril which the fate of his father kept ever before his eyes), he ordered that all his guards should attend him as an escort. Timidity, not passion, was the cause of the unusual state in which he visited the convent.

"Sister Angélique (such was the conventual name of Mlle. de Lafayette) received her royal lover with cold respect, and at first seemed to shrink from the confidence he forced upon her. The conversation lasted four hours, and at last Sister Angélique persuaded the King to seek an explanation of the suspicious letter from the Queen herself. Circumstances favoured her advice; night had fallen; the tempest had increased; the road back to Grosbois had become almost impassable, and Louis ordered his equipage to be driven to the Louvre, the residence of his deserted wife.

"Anne of Austria received her husband with surprise and pleasure; the dubious phrases in the letter were explained to his satisfaction, and he spent the night in the palace. . . ." Once again Louise de Lafayette had advised her king and queen wisely. The birth of Louis XIV the following year brought great joy to the king and country at large, for after twenty-three years it seemed a miracle that Heaven should answer the prayers of the unhappy queen of Louis XIII.

The next of these illustrious women, Marie Madeleine Pioch de la Vergne, was born in 1633. Her father, Aymer de la Vergne, governor of Havre de Grace; her mother, beautiful Marie de Péna, of a celebrated Provençal family, famous in the annals of that land of song and sunshine. Marie was educated in a manner far more thorough and elegant than the young girls of her time, showing wonderful proficiency in Latin, in which language she, after three months'

study, explained a passage which had been the cause of "great argument between her teachers, Ménange and Father Rapin, proving both those excellent gentlemen to be in the wrong!"

So smitten was the susceptible Ménange with the precocity, maybe the charms, of his fair pupil, that he promptly fell in love, addressing to her verses in choice Latin, which, with his devotion, were calmly ignored by the young lady, who seems to have been blessed with an extremely cool head on this and all other occasions. De Retz, who while imprisoned at Metz had the pleasure of meeting her, says she was very pretty and amiable, and though he was much attracted by her, she treated him "with great rigour."

In the year 1665, at the age of twenty-two, Marie de la Vergne married the Marquis de Lafayette, who scarcely appears to have been the equal of his brilliant wife, and, after the first few years, played but little part in her life. Of this union, there were born two sons and a daughter, one of the former being the direct ancestor of that Lafayette who did so much for the American cause; the other, an erratic and careless youth, who "either lost or gave away his mother's manuscripts!" Her sons were not with her after their earliest childhood; her daughter, a great comfort and pleasure, though her marriage with M. de la Trémouille of necessity somewhat separated her from her mother. Mme. de la Trémouille was a woman of unusual generosity, for, inheriting a large share of the Lafayette property, she very willingly "lent herself to an arrangement by which the estates, which the heirs of the name of Lafayette were anxious to preserve, returned to those of the family who had continued to reside in their native province." Thus, the family estates in Auvergne remained intact, and all, including the manor of the Maréchal de Lafayette, called Saint Romain, descended in a direct line to the Marquis de Lafayette, who asked in marriage the hand of Mlle. de Noailles.

By her marriage, Marie de la Vergne became the sister-in-law of Louise de Lafayette, now Mère Angélique, Superior of the Convent of Chaillot, and it was while visiting there that she met the widowed queen of Charles I of England and her daughter Henriette, afterward Duchesse d'Orléans. This princess then, and after her marriage to the king's brother, showed great friendship for the talented yet lonely authoress. Mme. de Lafayette had already begun to write; publishing anonymously, in 1660, a tale called "Mme. de Montpensier," which so pleased the Duchesse d'Orléans, that she said to the author: "You write well; write, and I will give you the material for good memoirs." Mme. de Lafayette did so, and in the amusing account of the little court has the ingenuous remark, "that it was now and then difficult to tell all the truth properly, without offending the princesse." The sudden and mysterious death of Mme. d'Orléans brought these gay little tales to a sadly abrupt finish and, in the arms of her favourite lady in waiting, poor agonised Henriette breathed her last. It is pleasant to know that she was always affectionately remembered by Henriette's children: in after years one of them, the Duchess of Savoy sent her a substantial remembrance in the shape of a "hundred yards of fine velvet, a hundred yards of satin with which to line it, and a portrait of herself, surrounded with diamonds."

There are no thrilling or harrowing events in the life of this Mme. de Lafayette. She was of a gentle, melancholy disposition, hating to write letters to such a degree that her devoted friend, Mme. de Sévigné complained, and her reply was as follows: "If I had a lover who wanted a letter of mine every morning, I should fall out with him for I could not write." This seems strange for a woman who was one of the noted novelists of her day. Her first tale, "Mme. de Montpensier," had been a great success, and the urgent requests of her friends, consisting of that select little

coterie of the Hôtel Rambouillet, made her follow with the "Princesse de Clèves" and "Mme. de Tendre." These novels all tell the same story, "which, in its main features is her own, the struggle between duty and passion in the heart of a virtuous woman, united to a man she cannot love. We do not think Mme. de Lafayette went so far as passion, but she had to strive against indifference and *ennui*, a weary load to bear in married life. Too sensible not to feel this strange void; too virtuous to indulge herself in forbidden affections, Mme. de Lafayette turned to friendship."

An extraordinary woman, who, "after ten years of married life, considered herself old at thirty-two!" and was so truthful that she did not attempt to conceal the fact of her age! who, ever actuated by that love of truth to an extent which sometimes led her to say things not acceptable to former acquaintances. In some memoirs which she wrote about the court of Louis XIV she mentions Racine's "Tragedy of Esther," in which every one of that day knew the character of the heroine was meant to represent Mme. de Maintenon, saying ironically, "that the real Esther was younger, and somewhat less *précieuse* in her piety than Mme. de Maintenon." And that lady, then the wife of her king said: "I have not been able to keep Mme. de Lafayette's friendship. The price she attached to its continuance was too high. I have at least shown her that I am as true and firm as herself." It would be interesting to know why these two clever women could not be friends, as, in early times, Mme. de Lafayette had known the insinuating young Mme. Scarron, then so obscure, destined to rise later to such power and eminence.

When about thirty-two, she formed that almost historic friendship with the great Duc de la Rochefoucauld, who gave to the world his feelings, his emotions, in the guise of those famous "Maxims." A cynical, worn-out man, whose youth had been filled with wild excesses of pleasure; leaving him at fifty but the ashes,

which no amount of raking could convert into a genial blaze, or even to flicker momentarily! He somewhat resembled his fair friend in disposition; "both were melancholy and disappointed: he in man's ambition, she in woman's tenderness." Their friendship was delicate and platonic. Her married life seems "to have been cheerless," and in the company of that cynical man she found sympathy, gentleness, and a tenderness which which came from the heart; not from the brain which evolved the "Maxims."

Her gay, breezy friend, Mme. de Sévigné, ever full of the joy of life and perfect health, at this time writes to her daughter: "Mme. de Lafayette is going to-morrow to a little house near Meudon where she has already been. She will spend a fortnight there, to be, as it were, suspended between heaven and earth. She does not want to talk, nor to answer, nor to listen. She is tired of saying good morning and good evening. She has fever every day and rest cures her—rest, therefore she requires. I shall go sometimes and see her." "M. de la Rochefoucauld is in the chair, you know; his sadness is incredible, and it is easy to guess what ails him."

Intimate as they were, there is little doubt that the young woman owes some of the charms of her writings to her constant association with the mind of the most polished man of his day. It was one of her literary axioms that "Every period struck out was worth a louis d'or, and every word, twenty sous." A candid mind and a judicious intellect were considered her greatest characteristics. She was praised for her "Divine reason." Segrais told her her judgment was superior to her wit. "She had the wisdom and gravity of years without their aspect or coolness, and La Rochefoucauld, a wearied man, but with more imagination and warmth than he showed, found in her all he could still care for in woman—sweetness and repose."

Her novel "Zaide" was wonderfully successful, and

par excellence, the topic of the day. Being written into a tragedy by one Boursault, its merits and demerits caused such a quarrel between Corneille and Racine that all friendship was thenceforth at an end between these great writers. *Toujours cherchez la femme!*

Two years after this brilliant success, Mme. de Lafayette suffered the loss of her devoted friend, La Rochefoucauld, who died in 1680. It was a great shock, and saddened her already pensive nature. Of the life, disposition, and tastes of her husband we know nothing; of his death, less. He is never mentioned. Scarcely ever with his brilliant wife, by whom he was treated with indifference almost amounting to contempt, she is said to have described him in that homely, romance-killing word—"Booby!" and this, after their first interview, where, in appearing to pay his *devoirs* to his beautiful *fiancée*, he made an unfortunate *entrée*, a veritable *faux pas*, tripping over an unseen footstool. Though the heart of woman ever rejoices in the homage of the superior sex, such literal and abject self-abasement before her charms, though flattering, was not appreciated by the beautiful Marie. Disdainfully she turned from her future lord, then scrambling hastily to his feet, with the accompaniment of ill-suppressed titters from all, and appearing even more awkward than nature had intended. The estrangement of the couple was well known to their friends. As the wits of the day put it, the husband

à son terre
Comme Monsieur son père,

while madame

Dis romances à Paris
Avec des beaux esprits,

a condition equally satisfactory to all parties.

Deprived of the friendship which had been so much to her, Mme. de Lafayette survived the duc thirteen

years. She " had long been religious, but austere piety marked the decline of her life. The abbé Duguet, one of the Porte Royale writers, was her confessor, or, to speak more correctly, her spiritual adviser. He seems to have taught her " the hard though sublime lesson which it behoves all Christians to learn, submission to the Divine will. Sorrow, sickness and sufferings almost intolerable found her calm and resigned, until, in her sixtieth year, she gave her soul to God."

She strongly indicated and defined in her works the paths leading to the modern novel, and her friend, Voltaire, proclaims her to be " The first to portray in her romances the manners and habits of people of quality and fashion." Her stories are little read now, but are of interest to the student of social customs, and well worth perusal for their charm of language and delicacy of expression.

Leaving behind the memory of Marie de la Vergne and her sorrows, time carries the family on till the year 1732, when that Marquis de Lafayette, whose son was to be so distinguished, was born, marrying later, Julie, daughter of the Marquis de la Rivière, who brought with her an immense dowry. Michel-Louis-Christophe-Roch-Gilbert-de Motier, Marquis de Lafayette, Colonel of the Grenadiers of France, Chevalier of Saint Louis, was, as his forebears had been, a soldier, and, at the call of his country, tore himself from the arms of his young bride, little thinking that the parting was eternal. There was a heavy presentiment of evil which his tearful bride could not shake off . . . but neither dreamed that he was to fall before the cannonade commanded by one Philips, an English officer, whom fate, many years after, in America, brought face to face with young Lafayette, the son of the man for whose death he had been directly responsible.

There has always been a vagueness about the exact time and place of the death of this Marquis de Lafayette. All historians giving it " At the battle of Minden,"

without further detail. It occurred at the *first* battle of Minden, July 13, 1757. There were several "Battles of Minden," which was a walled and fortified town, first taken by the French, under Generals Broglie and Chevert, July 13, 1757, during the Seven Years' War. It was recaptured by the combined English and Hanoverians, under Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, on March 14, 1758. The year following, June, 1759, the Duc de Broglie again took Minden by assault, and the main body of the French army, soon after advancing, took up a strong position resting upon that town. "By successful manœuvring, the combined English, Prussian and Hanovarian forces, under Prince Ferdinand, brought on a general engagement, in which the French were defeated, and Minden was next day surrendered to the allied army." It is this latter engagement, the most important of the three actions, which is distinguished as "The battle of Minden."

It was on the fatal thirteenth of July, 1757, that the fair Julie de la Rivière was separated in this world forever from her adoring young husband. She grieved piteously, her anguish becoming even more poignant, when, on the sixth of September, of the same year (1757), her son came into the world where he was to become so celebrated—where he was never to know the care and love of a father. The child was delicate and puny, requiring constant care and attention; he was the last of his line. He was born at Chavinaic, in Auvergne, which had for generations been the home of his people, and was, before the Revolution, a large and rich estate. The present château is in reality somewhat modern, being rebuilt in 1701 after a disastrous fire.

Everything is strangely vague in connection with the early life of this famous man; even the room in which he first saw the light is unknown. There are small traces of his boyhood, which was spent in the care of his maiden aunts. There was at one time a picture of him, painted as a child; but the devastating tempest

of the Revolution sent flying to the four winds much that would have been of inestimable interest to the historian. The death of his gentle mother, on the twelfth of April, 1769, left him an orphan of eleven years and seven months, the possessor of an immense fortune, at that time in the care of his guardians. Always from his birth a delicate and not over bright child, he was a constant source of care and anxiety to M. de Ségur. When old enough to choose between the only two careers open to a man of his rank—he chose the camp, as his ancestors had done before him. The life at court meant too much servility for one of his disposition. He was, however, eagerly welcomed and well known there, and treated with great friendship by the Dauphiness, Marie Antoinette, as well as by many other fair dames, who liked to pet *ce beau garçon*. A good-looking and eligible youth, those principles of liberty and republicanism which, from the first he openly possessed, amused the powdered and patched coquettes, who cared little if the sentiments were treasonable—when the lips uttering them were young and comely. By no means a prig, though one, almost the only, historical character about whom there has not been unearthed a mass of scandal, he was a good-looking, rich young noble of the time, noted from the first for those convictions which later made him so famous. He was on terms of closest intimacy with those high at court, which is shown by the following story, chronicled by the pen of the versatile and distinguished Lady Morgan during a visit paid to the Lafayette family some years after.

"'Is it true,'" I asked, "'that you went to a *bal masqué* at the opera, with the Queen of France, Marie Antoinette, leaning on your arm, the King knowing nothing of the matter till after your return?'"

"'I am afraid so,'" he said. "'She was so indiscreet, and I can conscientiously add, so innocent; however, the Comte d'Artois was of the party, and we were all young, enterprising, and pleasure-loving. But, what

was most absurd in the adventure, was, that when I pointed out Mme. du Barri—whose figure and favourite domino I knew—the Queen expressed the most anxious desire to hear her speak, and bade me *intriguer* her. She answered me flippantly, and I am sure if I had offered her my other arm, the Queen would not have objected to it; such was the *esprit d'aventure* at that moment in the court of Versailles, and in the head of the haughty daughter of Austria.' "

This must have taken place before his marriage, which occurred in April, 1774, as the death of Louis XV, on the tenth of May, scarcely a month later, put an end to the escapades of la du Barri and other ladies attendant on his " well beloved " majesty. Young Lafayette, by the way, was one of those at that ill-fated supper, from whose effects the monarch never recovered.

Odd, incomprehensible, as it may seem, the chief objection of the Duchesse d'Ayen to the proposed marriage of her daughter was the large fortune possessed by the suitor, whom she considered too young and too headstrong to have such wealth at his sole command. Though she liked young Lafayette, who had always, in a measure, been constantly admitted to her household, and could offer no personal objections, she absolutely refused to allow him to ally himself with her family, fearing for the happiness of her daughter.

So determined was she, that her complete silence on the subject, which she would allow no one to mention, much less discuss, in her presence, led to unhappy and strained relations with her beloved husband lasting several months and making a most unhappy estrangement between them. She, indeed, behaved most foolishly, but her husband understood her motives, and replied to a friend, who said that his wife had gone too far ever to change her mind: " You do not know Mme. d'Ayen; however far she may have gone, you will see that she will give way like a child if you prove to her that she is

in the wrong, but, on the other hand, she will never yield if she does not see her mistake."

These words proved a happy augury; after endless discussions, pleadings, entreaties from all the relations and family connections, after being repeatedly assured that her daughter would not leave her for the first years of her marriage—which stipulation she utterly refused to forego—that the marriage itself should only be celebrated at the end of two years, when the education of M. de Lafayette would be completed—she yielded her consent. Once having consented, she behaved in the whole-souled manner so typical of her nature. From the moment when the words of assent fell from her lips, she took to her heart, and ever afterward became the champion and well-wisher of the lonely orphan, whom fate had singled out for so much fame and bitter suffering. . . . Thus was arranged, unknown to her, the destiny of Adrienne de Noailles.

CHAPTER III

COULD one, in a dream, or by the magic of the shimmering crystal, conjure up a vision of Paris as it was in the days of the great Louis, how different would it seem! The narrow, unpaved streets, the queerly, gaily dressed people, the erection of those splendid hotels, which fashion dictated should be the town houses of the rich! The miles of gloomy walls, with peeping treetops, marking the colossal possessions of the church and various monastic orders, all, at that moment, in their zenith! In the quartier Saint Honoré, to put it approximately, from what are now the boulevards to the rue de Rivoli, from the avenue de l'Opéra to the rue Royale, were lands and gardens of convents and monasteries. The *Filles de l'Assomption*, whose church and part of the old convent now at the corner of the rue Saint Honoré and rue Cambon, opposite the famous café Voisin, is one of the few remaining traces of religious occupation of the quarter. This institution, which dates from the year 1670, extended with its gardens to the " Orangerie " of the Tuileries. Next to it, on the same side of that busy street, not as it is to-day filled with tiny shops and steep buildings, but rambling and quaint, came the convent of the Capuchins; then, the famous Feuillants, with their sumptuous garden and unlimited wealth. But there were, here and there, spaces of unoccupied ground, and, near one of these, in 1672, the idlers of the quarter lounged, watching the workmen dig, measure, and level the ground, and the arrival of great blocks of stone drawn on clumsy, creaking carts, by sturdy white horses, strain-

ing steadily against their loads. After the plans of Messire Jean Marot grew the princely house, but alas! ere idle curiosity could be fully gratified, a high and impervious wall hid the mysteries of the dwelling from the world, and what happened after was a sealed book. This hotel was the property of the Comtesse de Foix, one of that celebrated family whose tree boasts the name of the illustrious Gaston, long dust. Under her reign, it was the scene of courtly hospitality. We, to-day, have little idea of the state and magnificence of the houses of that time. This hotel extended from the present rue d'Alger—then non-existent—to the rue Saint Roch, a distance of between six hundred and fifty and seven hundred feet: to the gardens of the Tuileries, across the rue de Rivoli—then not cut. It contained a *cour d'honneur*, a *basse cour*—stable or back yard—an interior court, a *salle des gardes*—guard room—a *salle de dais*, found only in houses of the greatest pretensions, an *antichambre des valets de chambre*, and a *salle à manger* for the officers, besides, of course, the ordinary rooms and apartments on an equal scale of magnificence. To give some slight idea of its size, it was wider, longer, and in every detail ten times as magnificent as the palace de l'Elysée. It was almost a small village, and once within its walls the outside world ceased to exist. Though plain and ugly on the side of the rue Saint Honoré, the façade on the garden was superb. From the centre, a wide sweep of steps led into a beautiful garden, so large, that one of the later possessors used, on the day of Saint Hubert, to astonish the quarter by having a hunt, fox, horses, hounds, all in full cry, the barking of the dogs and the music of the horns being heard far away, while now and then a glimpse of pink-coated riders might be seen by those peeping over the neighbouring wall, as the hunt tore around the prim old gardens, and this, within four walls, in the heart of Paris! Magnificent trees shaded the lawns and flower beds; birds flew and chattered in

THE HOTEL DE NOAILLES
FROM THE GARDEN

From the original drawing in the Museé Carnivalet, Paris

the waving branches; an occasional rabbit burrowed under the walls and showed a scared, shy head for an instant ere whisking away whence he came. The gardens of the Tuileries, then veritable gardens and not the plain of gravel and stunted trees now left, sloped from the garden wall to the river. It was a scene of rural beauty, now hard to imagine, when stone walls bound the horizon on every side.

Many vicissitudes were the fate of this stately dwelling. Seventeen years after its erection by the family of de Foix, it passed into the hands of one Poussort, an uncle of the great financier, Colbert, of whose methods there have been many and diverse opinions. Like most of his belief, Colbert used his position to further the interests of his friends and protegées. Under the occupancy of Poussort, the " Hôtel Poussort " was the centre of much activity in intrigue, of great show and splendour. For three years, only, the hotel belonged to the relative of Colbert, and then passed into the hands of that d'Arne d'Armenonville, councillor and *bon vivant*, whose *petits soupers* were enjoyed by those bidden to take part in the *sub rosa* proceedings. By purchase, it then became the property of the Duc de Noailles, in 1711, and this family was by far the most illustrious of its owners. The first Maréchal de Noailles had hitherto lived near by, on the other side of the rue Saint Honoré, probably at the hotel of Mme. de Noailles, whose family, the Cossé-Brissiacs, then dwelt in the neighbourhood. At this period France was at her greatest excess of luxury, her most profligate, most witty moment. Everything was dared. Rank, fashion, wealth—there was nothing to be desired; no higher aspiration could be imagined than the state, the revenues, and officers of the de Noailles.

The foremost artists of the day were summoned to decorate the house; its walls hung with the richest silk; the retinue of servants princely; the state almost royal. The Hôtel de Noailles remained in the family until

after the Restoration, in 1814, but underwent many vicissitudes. It was famous for its picture gallery. Inside the walls was a sumptuous private chapel. Its stables could shelter half a regiment. Besides the Hôtel de Noailles, there was the " petit hotel de Noailles," in itself as large as an ordinary Paris house of to-day, with its five or six apartments. But, alas! the grand old place is swept away, and no trace is left of that " vast " Hôtel de Noailles, so well known to its contemporaries. Confiscated in the Revolution, it mercifully survived the pillage and torch, which was the fate of so many, and of the church and convent of the Feuillants, adjoining. Under the Empire, it was occupied by Brune, one of the three consuls, after he had ceased to live in the *Pavilléon de Flore,* which Napoleon desired for his sole occupancy. Brune continued to occupy the hotel despite the efforts of the de Noailles to regain possession of their property. After the Restoration and the return of the Duc de Noailles from Switzerland, he at once proceeded to take possession of his own, routing horse, foot and dragoons, the *archtrésor de l'Empire*, the Duc de Plaisance, who was obliged to make a hurried departure! Alas! the Duc de Noailles was a ruined man, almost nothing remained of his princely fortune, and the magnificence of his dwelling was far in advance of his finances. He lived quietly in one corner of the " petit hotel " on the street where, with a few domestics, he strove to gather the remnants of what had formerly been his. What a change! but the " petit hotel " was large enough for him to give an ample apartment each to his sister-in-law, Mme. de Montagu, and his granddaughter, Virginie de Lasteyrie, and their families. What pathetic memories for that saddened and ruined family, now so scattered, as they idled through the echoing apartments, the long gallery of pictures looking down in stolid rows upon the havoc, of which they had been the unwitting spectators! Mme. de Montagu and Virginie roamed in those lovely gardens, where the for-

mer had played as a child, though Virginie's childhood had few such pleasant souvenirs, and to both there seemed to be a spirit of peaceful resignation, a finality in each walk, each hour passed in the well-remembered rooms—a past dead, without hope of resurrection. The day, the life, the generation to which belonged the Hôtel de Noailles in all its pride was gone, never to return. It was typical of the obliterated *ancien régime*, to which was written in ineradicable letters—FINIS.

But the troubled condition of France was far from being at an end. As a thunder-clap came the news of Bonaparte's return. Once again did the Duc de Noailles return to Switzerland, having before his departure sold the Hôtel de Noailles to an eccentric Englishman, who cared nothing for the expressed desires, wishes, or hints on the part of the government, that it again desired the Hôtel de Noailles. Sir Francis Henry Egerton, of the family of the "ducs de Bresgewater" (Bridgewater), was one of those English "milords," so dear to the creators of French fiction, so seldom found elsewhere. He was, besides his other titles, a "Prince of the Holy Roman Empire," and well known at Paris for a decade. One of Napoleon's pet schemes, a more than cherished project, was the cutting through and completion of the rue de Rivoli as it appears to-day. Parts of this he was able to accomplish, by sacrificing the gardens of the former convents of the Capuchins and Feuillants, but when he desired to trespass on the grounds of Sir Francis that gentleman "sent the master of the world walking." Again, when the allies had entered Paris, and the Duke of Saxe-Coburg "manifested a desire, in virtue of a military requisition, to be lodged in the Hotel with all his suite," Sir Francis armed his thirty servants, took a *fusil de chasse*, and when the duke presented himself replied that he would resist force by force! Before this "thoroughly British eccentricity," the duke retired, but a Russian general, aide-de-camp to the Czar, "flat-

tered himself that he would be more lucky." Sir Henry again armed his thirty servants and gravely harangued the officer. "I have travelled much," he said, "but always, wherever I have drunk, eaten or lodged, I have paid. You are nothing more than a brigand in my eyes." The Russian general departed in search of reenforcements, and did not return. Once, seized with a desire to see his native land again, Sir Henry decided to leave Paris. For six months the important preparations went on; finally everything was ready. The departure had the appearance of an exploring expedition bound for the wilds. The entire quarter assembled one fine morning to see the last of the eccentric Englishman whose actions had furnished the theme of many a tale. He departed, escorted by his thirty servants and followed by a train of fifteen heavily loaded carriages containing baggage. This was the last of "milord Henry," decided the neighbours, dismissing the matter with a shrug, and resuming their interrupted occupations. Toward evening, the whole street was thrown into a state of wild conjecture, for the entire caravan reappeared, drew up at the gates of the hotel, and a moment later disappeared from view. What had happened? Sir Henry, having lunched at Saint Germain, "where, on finding the repast with which he was served detestable, and affrighted at the prospect of having to suffer such inconvenience every day, returned to Paris, never to leave again!"

"At his table, which was celebrated, Sir Henry invited companions of more than one kind. *Bijou* and *Biche*, the two favourite dogs, were often there seated on chairs, with imposing napkins around their necks, and to them each plate was solemnly offered. One day, however, their behaviour not conforming to the ideas of their master, they were punished in the most terrible manner! A tailor was immediately summoned.

"'These blackguards have deceived me,' said their

eccentric master. 'I have treated them like gentlemen, they have behaved like rascals. Take their measure! they shall wear for eight days the yellow coats and knee breeches of my valets, and stay in the anteroom, and be deprived of the honour of seeing me for a week.'"

Extraordinary man! With his dogs, his rare collection of royal letters and state papers; his yearly hunt in his great gardens; all passed into the bygones. The march of restless improvement, in 1840, cut the rue d'Alger through one end of the gardens, the rue 29th Juillet destroyed more, and to-day, the Hôtel Saint James is all that remains intact of the stately dwelling, which in three centuries had been the rendezvous of Paris! Part of the grand staircase exists; the old *salle des gardes* is the vestibule where the traveller enters heedless of the glories of former days. Only from the immense court may one form an idea of what the "vast" Hôtel de Noailles really meant, and this is but a fragment of what it was in the days of its glory. The gardens, which were on the rue de Rivoli, are covered with shops and hotels, and little of the original buildings are there, though, however, portions were employed in the additions and rebuilding which took place in 1840. It seems a pity that so fine a specimen of the architecture of the seventeenth century could not have been preserved as an object lesson; there are so many of the old hotels still intact and ever interesting as a relic of the days before the land was in the grasp of *Liberté, Egalité et Fraternité*, and more than most, would the Hôtel de Noailles have been explored by the antiquarian, the student of social customs, with keenest enjoyment, since it was the home of so illustrious a race.

But in the good old days, before the slightest hint of trouble had been breathed, when every one but the people of France lived a life of gay pleasure, the Hôtel

de Noailles was in all its glory, soon to be the scene of many weddings, for the daughters of the Duc d'Ayen were fast reaching the age when they could be brides, and suitors were not wanting. The favoured one for the hand of his cousin Louise, was the young Vicomte de Noailles, the second son of the Maréchal de Mouchy and younger brother of the Prince de Poix. A gallant young soldier, his suit was smiled upon by the Duc and Duchesse d'Ayen, though the latter considered her daughter too young to wed. Time, however, would remedy that, and with great pleasure to all the relatives the arrangements for the marriage were finally concluded. The bride-elect was not informed of the alliance in store for her, it being agreed by all that silence should be maintained for a year. Her mother, having a knowledge of the flighty propensities of youthful minds, wisely decided that their education would suffer. Adrienne, being still younger, a year and a half must pass before she would be told of the proposals of M. de Lafayette.

Naturally, the impatient young lovers suggested, importuned, urged, that a few meetings under the chaperonage of Mlle. Marin might be arranged as they took their morning walks, but prudent Mme. d'Ayen pleaded the necessity of preparing them suitably for the high positions which they were to occupy, the very short time which was to elapse before the marriages, and that such meetings would naturally tend to excite and distract them from their usual routine. It is more than probable, though unrecorded, that the enterprising young lovers found some means of occasionally seeing their *fiancées*, which, as they had always been in the habit of visiting at the Hôtel de Noailles, was not a matter of unsurmountable difficulty; but it was not until the end of the summer of 1772 that Mme. d'Ayen spoke to the unconscious Louise of the Vicomte de Noailles.

The heart of the young girl fluttered wildly, as,

with downcast eyes and rising blushes, she, half timidly, wholly bashfully, confessed to her mother, "that she had always regarded her cousin, as, perhaps, a little more than a friend."

He was a lovable and attractive suitor, one who might cause a flutter in the heart of any damsel; and, young though he was, showed none of those dissolute characteristics common to the youth of his day. The Noailles families had always been closely united, so the heart of the mother would not suffer the shock and separation which would have been hers had her daughter married a stranger. As the wedding-day drew near, the lovers were permitted many a sweet half hour of low-toned conversation, so softly spoken that the drowsy noddings of the sleepy duenna, at the other end of the long salon, were in no way disturbed, or her incipient slumbers curtailed . . . and sometimes, at Versailles, where her future mother-in-law, the "Mme. l'Étiquette" of Marie Antoinette's day, held sway, Louise had a few minutes with her lover, as the busy Maréchale de Mouchy was called away to decide a knotty point of etiquette. This famous and much-discussed old lady was deeply attached to her niece, the chosen wife of her second son, and both before and after the wedding lost no occasion to show by every kind means in her power her sentiments toward the future Mme. la Vicomtesse de Noailles. Several times when visiting her aunt Louise had been taken to the *petits appartements* of the Dauphiness, that princess receiving her with the sweet graciousness and lack of hauteur which was the cause of so many unfavourable comments from the French nation which could not comprehend that a princess could be so informal and, at the same time, preserve unsullied her character. . . . Poor Marie Antoinette, with her love of simplicity, her mimic farm, and her tragic fate! How little those two girls, one soon to be a bride, the other, even at this time beginning to feel the discomforts of her lonely position, so different from

the simple life at the court of Vienna, dreamed of what was so soon to befall them! Poor " Mme. l'Étiquette," whose face reflected the pleasure she felt in the gracious reception accorded her niece—the same fearful ending was to be hers!

The short time before the wedding-day for the first of her beloved children was a period of serious thought and deep prayer for Mme. d'Ayen, who tried to leave nothing undone that would make her child what she herself prized before all worldly honours and position—sincerely and devoutly a good Christian. She had always superintended and arranged all the details of their somewhat erratic education, because her husband played absolutely no part in the happenings of everyday life, and the children did not suffer from being left to the sole guidance of their mother, for nowhere can there be found a woman better deserving of every eulogy that can be written. She was the epitome of domestic perfection. A better mother than wife, in the sense that her children came far before her husband in her idea of duty. Despite the well-known indecision of her mind, she possessed strongly marked individuality and personality, and all her daughters seem to have taken after her in disposition and traits to a greater degree than they resembled their father. All the love and devotion which she lavished on them was amply repaid by them in later years, when, in sorrow and sunshine, they never left her side until death separated them, letting life hang in the balance rather than part from her.

" Her mind and heart were alike upright, and the idea of regulating our lives on the principles of virtue and duty, apart from all interested motives, became so habitual to us, owing not only to our mother's lessons and to her example, but also to that of our father on the too rare occasions on which we had the opportunity of seeing him, that the first instances which we met with of a contrary conduct in many of those who were

commonly called honest people caused us a painful impression of surprise which required many years of contact with the world to diminish in our minds. . . . Her confidence in us was well calculated to elevate our soul by showing us hers in all its purity," wrote her daughter Adrienne.

CHAPTER IV

THE nuptial preparations of these girls—one is almost tempted to call them children—were not to be disposed of lightly. They were the culmination of years of careful planning and innumerable ceremonious consultations; they were hedged with the thousand niceties of the etiquette of the day, which had then lost little of the tremendous pomp decreed by the *Roi Soleil* as due the dignity of those great enough to be of his *entourage*. The family of the Noailles was one of the most powerful as well as richest in France, linked by marriage with others equally celebrated; there was no height to which the splendour of their entertainments could not aspire. The men who were to be allied with the daughters of this proud race were the foremost nobles of the court. The Vicomte de Noailles was of the " race," and the young Lafayette, though bereaved of father and mother, lacked not in worldly goods or influence. The Duc d'Ayen was the friend and confidant of the king, as his ancestors had been, and what they would the Noailles could command. There were interviews with solemn men in black gowns and spectacles, representing the law, who came and went with huge parchments on which were recorded the lands, houses, and other personal wealth of the contracting parties. The estates of M. de Lafayette afforded him an income of 120,000 livres a year; the dowry of Mlle. de Noailles was 200,000 livres, allowing her an income of 9,000 livres. Despite this, in later days Lafayette by his foolish expenditure greatly impoverished his splendid inheritance,

and is shown to have borrowed large sums from time to time. Through the Revolution he, with all the other nobles in France, was utterly ruined, though he eventually recovered a portion of his belongings. To the careful administration of his guardians during his long minority he owed the large fortune in ready money of which he became possessed upon his majority.

Edifying as are these facts, they were as nothing in the feminine mind compared to the details of the trousseaux—almost stupendous in their proportions and not lightly to be dismissed. The quantities of *lingerie* took time to prepare, although, as has been done by every prudent French mother before and since, the household linens and sundry things needed in the tremendous establishments of that time had been in preparation for years against the day when the daughters should wed. There were heirlooms, laces to be bleached, jewels to be reset for the brides whose youthful charms they were to enhance. Without number were the quantities of those filmy, gossamer muslins, wrought by repentant fingers in the cloister, needed for the *negligées* of madame—those bewitching garments which a vagrant print brings sometimes before our envious eyes. What dresses of ceremony, with their impossible hoops and Gargantuan trains—erections of intricate and solemn consultation, of Heaven knows how much work! Their festoons of fairylike silver roses, panels of jewelled arabesques; bouffant cascades of lace, lighter and more frail than the web of the patient spider, the masses of shimmering satins and velvets. . . . Lyons could fashion no weave of its famed looms too rich for the tastes of those choosing what was to add to the charm of the childish brides.

Those awesome court trains brought joy to the hearts of the sisters, so young, so soon to wear the magic little circles of gold. They insisted on "dressing up" as girls have done and will do till we revert to the primitive simplicity of our first parents. Tying

those gorgeous creations over their simple white frocks, they rapturously swept the rustling yards of brocade over the age-stained floors whose marvellous polish threw back reflections of exaggerated absurdity and mirth-provoking grotesqueness. How the old mirrors woke from their habitual calm serenity, startled by the visions of magnificent plumes and aigrettes mischievously perched at rakish and impossible angles on the hastily improvised coiffures! The jewel cases, opened with delighted cries of joy, their contents magnified a thousandfold by the floods of sunshine pouring through the small-paned windows. At the time of her sister's wedding Adrienne knew nothing of her approaching betrothal, and if there was a longing in her girlish heart for the jewels of the future Vicomtesse de Noailles, her casket was to be even more richly filled, for the Marquis de Lafayette was an only child, and everything belonging to his dead mother came to his bride; while the mother of the Vicomte de Noailles was a lady who clung tenaciously to her own and was survived only a short time by the gentle Louise, and in days when little thought was given to the contents of jewel cases, or to any of the poor trivial vanities dear to the feminine heart. . . .

Alack! that no careful scribe has left minute details of those two weddings; but there exists, precise and accurate, the account of their younger sister's marriage in 1783—which pictures vividly the ceremony, the custom of the day, so interesting because no trace of its stately charm remains. At that date the "Deluge" had almost arrived; the breath of the dreadful events so shortly to occur had begun to be felt; it was almost the end of the France of chivalry—of the *ancien régime*. This sister married the Marquis de Montagu, son of a rich and powerful family, all of whom turned out *en grand tenue* to fittingly adorn the occasion.

"The *corbeille* was magnificent, the diamonds alone being valued at more than forty thousand livres," says

the writer, and this, be it remembered, was in the year 1783, when those attractive stones had not reached their present prohibitive value. "To the presents of the husband each member of the family had added his mite. There was, for example, a diamond cross *à la Jeanette,* the offering of Mme. la Comtesse de Tessé and the Duchesse de Lesparre, sisters of the Duc d'Ayen; a ring of large diamonds presented by the Marquis de la Salle; a rich dressing case, given by M. d'Augusseau; a table, in silver gilt, from the Maréchal and Maréchale de Noailles, the grandparents of the bride; three diamond ornaments, in the form of ears of wheat, from the three older sisters of the bride; diamond earrings from the Marquis and Marquise de Bouzola. There was also, at the bottom of the *corbeille,* a purse of two hundred louis, which Mlle. de Noailles at once divided among those who had served her.

"From the time the contract was signed to the day before the marriage, it was necessary each day to make the most ceremonious of toilets—a new one for each occasion—in which to receive the visits of ceremony usual at this time. All Paris passed in a rainbow procession. The drudgery commenced at six o'clock in the evening, and was finished, or rather continued, by a grand supper. The *fiancée, tirée à quatre épingles,* laced, busked, stiffened within an inch of her life, erect as a ramrod, and, above all, terribly bored, was seated by the side of her mother, and by her presented to each arrival, who never failed to make at least two or three of the most ceremonious reverences, which etiquette demanded should be as ceremoniously returned by the bride-elect. All the Montagus were there in battle array; so was every living Noailles, without counting the relations and connections of both families."

The marriage was celebrated on May 12, 1783, in the choir of the church of Saint Roch. The church was filled to suffocation. "The bride, pale despite her brunette colouring, timid, and of a ravishing modesty," was

led by her father up to her *prie-dieu*. She wore a dress of "silver tissue, with plumes which held up the trimming and looped the material into those enormous *panniers* then worn." She was obliged to pass between two rows of relations in the midst of an immense crowd, every eye riveted upon her. . . . The ceremony being over, the Vicomte de Beaune, her father-in-law, took her by the hand to lead her to her carriage. . . . No sooner had she regained the Hôtel de Noailles and been relieved of her veil, than she ran to her sister's room, "where she stayed until summoned to take part in the gala proceedings." After dinner, which was a family affair, she was "re-dressed in another gown and once more rejoined the company." The day terminated by a supper of sixty covers, during which "the young spouses were seated side by side." . . . The honeymoon as we know it seems not to have been a part of the French marriage of that day, for we are told they "retired later" to that regal apartment of Mme. d'Ayen's, with its crimson and gold state, which "was their *chambre nuptial*."

But enough of the young Montagus. The presents of the gentle Louise were magnificent, the *Bien Aimé* remembering the bride generously, as he usually did remember anything young, good-looking, and feminine. The cumbersome coaches lumbered into the *cour d'honneur* of the Hôtel de Noailles, then in gala attire, laden with those whose names are now written on the pages of their country's history and famous for their valour, diplomacy, or the nobility of their deaths. The tapers threw a shadowy halo around the altar, where golden-robed priests awaited the arrival of the bridal *cortège*. Their solemn words, the roll of the organ, the mist of incense, all thrilled the pious heart of Mme. d'Ayen, who prayed ceaselessly for the child leaving her care. She had tried faithfully and earnestly to make her children good Christians; had she succeeded? Such was her oppressing thought as she stood by the side of the

cousins plighting their troth, the tears forcing themselves from her downcast eyes. Her other children, impressed, probably frightened, by the unusual happenings, cried incessantly throughout the ceremony. "It was indeed with feelings impossible to describe that Mme. d'Ayen led her oldest daughter to the altar."

What did Louise de Noailles wear when presented to her king? Was the du Barri there when the bride received the felicitations of Louis? Not if "Mme. l'Étiquette" had a word in the arrangement, for the plumes of the virtuous comtesse bristled at the mention of the favourite. Such was the tattle of the court!

Scarcely was this wedding *un fait accompli* before Adrienne was told of the proposals of M. de Lafayette, "towards whom," she writes, "I was already attracted by feelings forerunners of that deep and tender affection which every day has united us more and more in the midst of all the vicissitudes of this life; in the midst of the blessings and misfortunes which have filled it for the last twenty-four years." She naïvely confesses "with what pleasure I learnt that for more than a year my mother had looked upon and loved him as a son," and little Adrienne goes on to tell us, "my mother tried to calm my poor weak brain, which was over excited by the importance of the coming event." Perhaps the little heart played some part even more than the "poor weak brain"—*quien sabe*?

The nature and disposition of the future Mme. de Lafayette was one of the utmost sweetness and nobility. While possessing sufficient wit and spirit she was not in the slightest degree as a child, or in later life, frivolous. Poor soul, she had little cause to be! After her marriage she went "frequently to the play and to balls; she enjoyed all these pleasures with the liveliness of her age and disposition. Nevertheless, I do not think she ever allowed herself to join in any before it had been proved to her that she was conscientiously obliged to partake in them. Never, even in her earliest

youth, did she allow herself to taste a single worldly amusement without being actuated by motives of duty superior to those which forbid them." (The above sentiments are not unlike the well-known opinions of St. Francis Xavier on the subject of dancing.)

"It is worthy of remark that the religious doubts which tortured her should not have made her timorous on this point. She did not join in them without reflection, but once decided, she would enjoy herself thoroughly and without scruple. On the contrary, she was incessantly applying for the grace of God in order to learn the fullness of truth. He granted her prayers, her mind ceased to be troubled. She made her first communion that same year, on the first Sunday after Easter, and gave herself up to God, in whom she continued to trust so faithfully amidst the vicissitudes of life."

Though she had known M. de Lafayette before, it was with an added interest, a natural shyness, that they met after the betrothal had been announced to the young girl. The world was fair and smiling on that beautiful morning; the tender almonds were budding into softest green; the *marronniers* threw their white perfumed blossoms, suggestive of the snowy bridal wreath, in soft masses over the verdant turf, some clinging lovingly to the tresses which so soon would be hidden by the wedding veil. The daffodils and tulips were breaking into rare blooms; the world waking from her winter sleep. All seemed to smile a welcome to the young lovers, who, for a few rare and precious moments alone, walked daintily through tulip-bordered paths, between the fantastically clipped hedges, where grotesque yews spoke of the fanciful tyranny of the autocrat, Lenôtre, of whom even the Grand Monarque had stood in awe, so imperious and dogmatic were his mandates.

Though many a beauty and beau had tripped o'er the lawns of the Hôtel de Noailles, there was none to

whom the world looked more fair, none with a brighter future than these two. The hedges had listened to plots, to intrigues, the vows of lovers, and once again on that April morning were words of infinite tenderness spoken by wooing lips; and what a divine blush, as the gallant marquis pressed his first kiss—unchaperoned, which makes a very great difference—on the taper fingers of Mlle. de Noailles, and bravely drew his sword to free the path of a rebellious bramble, that it might not annoy his " dearest Adrienne."

These interviews were sweet from their very rareness, for the little bride elect was kept well occupied by her mother, though the faithful Mlle. Marin could have betrayed the fact that conjugations of the verb *aimer* in the several languages studied by her pupil seemed an easier task than some of the more prosaic, if less intricate, branches prescribed by Mme. la Duchesse. Few realised the depth of feeling possessed by the child of fourteen. It was written of her some years later: " I do not think it possible to give an idea of my mother's way of loving. It was peculiar to herself. Her affection for my father predominated over every other feeling without diminishing any. It might be said she felt for him the most passionate attachment, if that expression was in harmony with the exquisite delicacy which kept her from any of the evil impulses generally attendant upon that feeling. Neither had she ever a moment of *exigence*. Not only was it impossible for my father to perceive a wish that could be unwelcome to him, but even in the depths of her heart never did there lurk a little feeling. She was fourteen and a half when she married; at that time her mind was agitated by religious doubts. Notwithstanding the very tender feelings which drew her towards my father, she was much troubled by the thought of the solemn engagement she was taking at so early an age. All she felt appeared to her beyond her strength, and she placed herself under the protection of God, to whom in

the midst of her difficulties she never ceased to look for support."

"Happy's the wooing that's not long adoing," sayeth the old proverb, and on Monday, the eleventh day of April, in the year 1774, the gallant young Marquis de Lafayette, and his "dearest Adrienne" took each other, "for better for worse," "in sickness and in health," till "death did them part," the knot being tied by the vicaire général de l'archevêché de Paris, l'abbé Paul de Murat, cousin of the bridegroom. The wedding differed little from that of her sister: the same guests nodded and gossiped as they awaited the bride; the solemn benediction again thrilled the heart of the mother, as her second daughter was given to the protecting care of a husband. The warm sun shone gladly on the youthful couple as they stepped from the gloomy gray shelter of the incense-filled chapel into the spring world, so full of joy and promise to them.

. . . . . .

It had been the stipulation of Mme. d'Ayen, upon giving her consent to the marriage, that the very youthful Lafayettes should live with her for the next two years, Lafayette paying a *pension alimentaire* of eight thousand livres a year. There were many murmurs on the part of the nineteen-year-old husband, though the fifteen-year-old bride did not raise her voice against the maternal authority; but the promise had been given and seemed wise, as shortly after the wedding the husband had to return to his regiment at Metz, whereupon the bride dissolved into tears, and for some days refused to be comforted, sobbing her grief away on the sympathising shoulders of mother and sisters. Just why she could not have gone with him is unexplained, but, at any rate, she felt keenly the first of the many separations which fate had ordained should be theirs and "which made her feel how deeply she was attached to him."

Louise, though much in the society of her husband's

parents, at Versailles, found frequent opportunities to join her mother and sisters, always returning reluctantly when the visit was over. She brought with her many bits of gossip anent the doings of the new queen, Marie Antoinette, with whom she had always been a favourite, though, owing to the disposition of Louis XVI, which was the antipodes of that of his grandfather, the atmosphere surrounding the throne somewhat lacked a certain spiciness which had been rather prevalent prior to the death of that past master of impropriety. The du Barri was living a quiet and retired life, the court, still in mourning, all seemed to be waiting—waiting for that fearful cataclysm which was so soon to sweep it out of existence.

In the September following Adrienne's wedding, an amusing and unromantic event occurred. It being the fashion then set by the princes and others of the royal family, whose members had so often suffered from the smallpox, to be inoculated, M. de Lafayette, on returning from his regiment, insisted on submitting to the somewhat crude ordeal. Mme. d'Ayen took a house at Chaillot for the purpose, where she shut herself up with the Marquis and his wife until the tiresome period was over. Presumably Adrienne was not inoculated, as there is no mention of anything of the kind, but the experiment seems rather risky. Mme. d'Ayen and Adrienne did everything to keep him amused, and, having been a victim to the disfiguring disease, the former took the most scrupulous care of his health and well-being, fearing that he should be marked as she had been. This was an unusual act of affection on the part of a mother-in-law, few going to such lengths in their devotion.

The winter following the wedding was very gay. They went to balls; to the play; the court of Marie Antoinette was the center of attractiveness. Folly and frivolity led the fashion; the hours were too brief for pleasure. Mme. d'Ayen, forced from her retirement

at the request of her husband, whom she did not wish to offend, took her daughters to the queen's ball every week, appearing at court frequently on other occasions. After these functions, she gave very elegant suppers, to which she invited the friends of her sons-in-law and such people as were pointed out by her husband as being able to advance the interests of these young men. This gayety lasted during the "Quartier" of the duc, during which he was obliged to reside at Versailles to be near the person of his king. Mme. d'Ayen disliked and despised this life, and it was with a deep-drawn sigh of relief that she returned to her usual avocations, thanking her protecting spirit that her place was not at court! It seems almost unnatural that the women of this branch of the Noailles family showed so little inclination for the atmosphere surrounding royalty and its consequent pomp, when the family had, for generations, by their right of wealth and birth played such a prominent part in the *entourage* of the sovereign. They were content to leave their representation to the Maréchale de Mouchy, "Mme. l'Étiquette," whose well-known features formed, one might say, a landmark there for almost too many years to count. She loved the life, Mme. d'Ayen hated it; both were content to follow the inclination most pleasing—a very satisfactory way of arranging the matter.

The young Lafayettes formed part of that frivolous little coterie to which the whim of Marie Antoinette was law; whose aim and occupation was to invent and dance ballets, new charades, and rack their brains for something to while and speed the passing hour lest it should hang too heavily upon those for whom life was preparing such tragic hours of sorrow. Among these butterflies, the "great boy with red hair," as Lafayette was known, was singularly awkward and ill at ease. He danced so badly that he hated to appear on the floor of the ballroom, which he was often obliged to do at the command of his mischievous queen, who twitted

him unmercifully upon that *gaucherie* which he was never able to overcome. Deficient, too, was he in another fashionable habit of the gentlemen of his day—he was unable to drink much, and, greatly to his disgust, ever obliged to limit himself to small libations, or to retire ignominiously from the field of battle ere the fray had commenced in good earnest. Proud was he, on one occasion, when he had been able to keep pace with those jolly companions of *L'epée du Bois*, in their battle against the good *vin de champagne*, with no other ill effect than a weakness of the legs, which necessitated assistance when he sought his carriage. Loudly he begged them, *N'oubliez pas de dire à Noailles comme j'ai bien bu!*—de Noailles being the happy possessor of " the head of an Englishman," much to the envy of Lafayette. Such were the diverse ambitions of the young patriot!

CHAPTER V

OF the many princely families, almost royal in their state and influence, which have made the history of France what it is, two stand foremost in their day—the Noailles and Rohans. Ever actuated by a fierce and undying rivalry, countless romances might be written on the themes furnished by their intrigues and hatreds. So interwoven are the chronicles of the former family with those of contemporary France, that it is difficult, nay, impossible, to search its pages without finding incidents of the deepest interest to the student. Related through marriage and consanguinity in the closest degree to the old nobility of the France of ante "Deluge" days, their wealth and influence enabled them to command unlimited favour, though some of the doings might not be quite in accord with the modern ideas of right and justice.

Abnormally ambitious, through many vicissitudes, intrigues, conspicuous royal favour, the family rose quietly, steadily, to an opulence and power almost too great for mere subjects. Rank and honours of the highest degree were theirs. Deriving, or assuming their name from the Château of Noailles, in the territory of Ayen, between Brives and Turenne, in Limousin, it was in the eleventh century that they first became prominent, though at this time their renown did not reach beyond their native province. The Sieurs de Noailles went, as did others of their time, with that mad mass, called the Crusaders, to the Holy Land. It was an easy and novel expiation of sin to journey with congenial

companions to a land where restraint was unknown, plunder plenty, and no one to dictate. Whether the Holy Sepulchre would, from any other but a sentimental point of view, have been much benefited had it changed hands, is a matter of conjecture; but the excuse served the seigneurs of the time as a diversion and varied the monotony of surreptitiously stealing one another's sheep and harrying the peasantry.

As a family, it was a characteristic, almost an unwritten law, that the Noailles must be first. Precedence and power were the very breath of life to the proud race. An old chronicle of the times tells us: "François de Noailles (1504–62), one of the ablest statesmen France ever produced, obtained precedence over Vargas, the Spanish ambassador" (ambassador to the Porte), "and negotiates a peace between the Turks and Venetians, and preserves a large part of the island of Candia, to which the Turks have laid siege." There seems to have been an inherent rivalry toward the representatives of Spain, for the attention of the courts of Europe was attracted by the magnificent splendour and display of Antoine de Noailles, admiral of France, ambassador to Whitehall in the sixteenth century, who made a gallant but vain attempt to "dim the brilliance of the Spanish representative, one Simon Reynard, and thereby impoverished himself," though gaining a great vogue among the fair sex, and much commendation from the beauties surrounding the "Virgin Queen," not to mention some marks of approbation from the royal termagent herself!

"In 1534 the United Provinces, thinking Maurice too young (for a ruler), offered to put themselves under the dominion of Henri III, but so advantageous a proposal backed by the sage advice of M. de Noailles, was refused by that wise prince." Showing in this instance that de Noailles held a post of trust and weight in the confidence of his sovereign. Some years later,

in 1663, the "County of d'Ayen was raised to a duchy and peerage." They were warlike, too, and no daredevil expedition of the day failed to count a de Noailles in its ranks.

The son of the Admiral de Noailles just mentioned had been created a count by his namesake and patron, Henri IV. He achieved much renown for his resource and daring in the religious wars which stirred France at that time.

Rather amusing is the glimpse of a teapot tempest caused by one of the thousand petty intrigues of the court of young Louis XIV. "A counterfeit letter in the Spanish language had been delivered to the queen in 1662, wherein endeavours were used to make that young princess jealous of the king, with a view of prejudicing a person for whom the king had a personal regard. The authors of this intrigue were detected; the king pardoned the Duchesse d'Orléans; the Comte de Guiche was banished; de Vardes was sent to prison, where he continued a long time; the Comtesse de Soissons (Olympe de Mancini) was ordered away to Champagne, where her husband was governor. De Vardes was the most guilty of them all, for he not only composed the letter which the Comte de Guiche translated into Spanish, but he threw the suspicion on the Duchesse de Noailles, a lady of honour to the queen; and this calumny was the cause that both the husband and wife were divested of their employments. The duc was obliged to sell his post as lieutenant of the Light Horse to the Duc de Chaulnes for five hundred thousand livres. The duchesse was also forced to resign her employment of lady of honour in favour of Mme. de Montausier, for a hundred and fifty thousand livres; they were the worthiest people belonging to the court," quaintly concludes the writer, so even then it would seem as if virtue was sometimes the scapegoat.

In 1698 the king, always under some feminine influence, was the prey of Mme. de Maintenon, who

ruled him by alternately bullying and appealing to his religious shortcomings. This estimable lady had a niece, Mlle. d'Aubigné, who must be settled in life. The king wished to marry Mlle. d'Aubigné to the Prince de Marcillac, son of the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, and had spoken to him on the subject, to which the prince had consented out of respect and politeness. But this nobleman and Mme. de Maintenon were never very friendly, and the king's proposition was coldly received by the favourite, so much so that Louis gave it no further thought.

Mme. de Maintenon, who had her own views, then suggested the Comte d'Ayen. "The king did not care much for the Noailles," but Maintenon desired the marriage. She promised her niece 600,000 livres, the king gave her 300,000 in ready money, 500,000 to be drawn on the Hôtel de Ville, 100,000 in precious stones; the reversion of the governorship of Rousillon, Perpignan, etc., to M. de Noailles (Comte d'Ayen), 38,000 livres of income, the governorship of Biron to M. d'Aubigné, and a place as *dame de palais* to the bride. The marriage was announced on Tuesday, March 11th, and solemnised on the last Tuesday of the same month in the year 1698. According to those jovial customs dear to our ancestors, mirth and frolic reigned, the king "giving with his own hand the 'chemise' to the Comte d'Ayen, while the Duchesse de Bourgogne performed the same office for the bride." The monarch attended the happy couple to the nuptial couch, and, announcing that he would give them each an annuity of 8,000 livres, bade them a cordial *bon soir*, and "drawing the heavy curtains on them, retired."

Is it at all extraordinary that the people were taxed to the point of starvation, that discontent pervaded the fair land of France, when the mere whim, the nod of a wanton, could drain the royal treasury of sums of such great magnitude?

It is to the brothers, one archbishop and cardinal, the other gaining by his gallantry the coveted *bâton* of a *maréchal de France*, that the house of Noailles owes its greatest prominence, its most illustrious eminence; when it was rivalled only by the haughty Rohans, they of the arrogant motto:

Roi ne puis,
Prince ne daigne,
Rohan je suis!

Louis Antoine de Noailles, brother of the maréchal (1650–1728) had been consecrated, and almost immediately after called to the See of Chalons-sur-Marne. He was loath to accept this splendid diocese where the lord bishop ranked as a count and peer of France, preferring to remain a simple priest, and, despite the urgent wishes, the desires of his powerful family, it was not until a mandate from the Pope commanded him to assume the dignities of his office that he reluctantly consented to desert the humble sphere to which he was so wedded. He shone at Chalons, "by the austerity he displayed," by the angelic simplicity of his manner, the gentle solicitude, modesty, truly pastoral love and care for his flock—an utter absence of worldliness, so rare in the pampered churchman of those days. Again, the influence of his powerful family procured for him the archbishopric of Paris, where he succeeded Monseigneur Harlay in 1695. Again he pleaded to be allowed to remain where his heart dictated, but the interests of the family demanded that he should fill the exalted rank for which he had been chosen, and once more he was an unwilling sacrifice. Even then he cared little for the wonderful magnificence and pomp of his surroundings, which were princely, almost vying with that of the sovereign. His eyes were raised to heaven, and did not linger on the glittering splendours which meant so little to him. He pleased the king and Mme. de Maintenon by the rare

frankness and simplicity of his demeanour, his lack of affectation, and, what was almost unparalleled in a powerful prince of the Church, his great modesty amid the luxury of his environment. Thanks to the high favour he enjoyed, de Noailles was made a cardinal in 1700. Through this office he became possessed of unlimited power, which he does not seem to have used evilly, furnishing in his behaviour a striking contrast to his predecessor in office, the infamous Harlay. It was de Noailles who in 1695 humanely procured the release of Mme. Guyon, who had been thrown into the Bastille. Her only crime being a foolish notion that she was a latter-day St. Thérèse, which idea not proving in accord with those favoured by the clergy, she had, after many vicissitudes, been imprisoned. The woman was harmless, and died fifteen years later at Blois, "much respected by all for her life of charity and piety."

It seems inconsistent with the clemency displayed on that and other occasions, that he should have so resolutely and doggedly opposed the wish of the king to pardon the notorious Mme. Tiquet, who was condemned to the scaffold on June 3, 1693, for having several times attempted the life of her husband. Though a woman of many intrigues and faults, the fact that her husband was in no manner of means an ideal companion made some incline toward mercy. The knowledge that M. Tiquet did not seek to obtain the slightest respite, only suggesting that a greater part of her fortune than the state had ordered allotted to him should become his, might have appealed to the Christian feelings of the archbishop and caused him to show some leniency. Petitions from the influential friends she possessed were laid before the king, who was disposed to exercise his prerogative of mercy, but the saintly archbishop was obdurate. The unhappy woman was beheaded on the scaffold of the Place-de-Grève, suffering horribly from the clumsiness of the executioner, who took several

blows to decapitate her. It is said Mme. Tiquet's appearance was that of a saint, as, dressed in the white garment of the condemned, she extended her fingers to the executioner, who assisted her to mount the steps, which she did with all the grace and dignity for which she had been noted. To add to the horrors of the scene, a violent thunderstorm broke just as they reached the Place-de-Grève, and the condemned woman was obliged to wait until it had abated, all the time watching with fascinated horror the conveyance which had been sent for her remains by her relatives draw nearer, awaiting its ghastly freight!

Louis Antoine de Noailles was a man of extraordinary independence, absolutely refusing to administer extreme unction to the notorious Duchesse de Berri, whose tampering with her health had reduced her to the point of death. The regent—her father—stormed, swore, implored in vain, the cardinal was obdurate. The controversy lasted for five days, during which time the duchesse recovered—the cardinal had carried his point. To him Paris was indebted for the rebuilding of the beautiful archepiscopal palace, now, alas! destroyed in the Revolution of 1831, which then adjoined and belonged to the Church of Nôtre Dame. He, on another occasion, refused to give "letters demissory" to the notorious Dubois, who had cleverly tricked the regent into making him Archbishop of Cambrai. But the powerful favourite found the Archbishop of Rouen more tractable, and gained his end, his consecration being conducted with a magnificence previously unknown in France; the Cardinal de Rohan, between whom and the Cardinal de Noailles there was the fiercest rivalry for power, officiating.

One thing which speaks well for the integrity and excellence of de Noailles is the bitter and inveterate hatred in which he was held by the Jesuits, who carried their enmity to the length of concocting, and nearly perfecting a plan to abduct him. As usual, a woman in-

CARDINAL DE NOAILLES ARCHEVESQUE DE PARIS DUC ET PAIR DE FRANCE M.re L.s A.e
N. de Largillierre pinxit
Steph. Desrochers Sculp.
et ex. a Paris rue S. Jacques vis a vis les Mathurins.
Si par son rang Sublime, et sa Sage conduite,
Cet illustre Prelat brille aux yeux des Mortels;
Son humilité cache, au pied de nos Autels,
Cent vertus dont Dieu seul connoit tout le Merite.

THE CARDINAL DE NOAILLES

From a print in the collection of the author

tervened, betraying the plot to the cardinal, who was enabled to escape the toils of his wily foes, much to their disgust and chagrin. He lived to a good old age, and died regretted by the many to whom he had shown favour.

His brother, Antoine Jules (1650–1708), was a most extraordinary character. "The death of the Maréchal de Noailles," says one of his contemporaries, "furnished the Court with a spectacle capable of producing great reflections." He was a man of prodigious size, fond of the pleasures of the table, of which he was by no means abstemious. Born at the court, of a father and mother high in the favour and confidence of the queen mother (Anne of Austria) and Mazarin, he naturally grew up with no other knowledge than that of the court and its intrigues. His horizon was bounded by the palace walls. Mentally slow-witted, and not much of a thinker, "few of his rank were as dull-spirited and coarse as he proved himself to be. He abased himself to the degree of publicly carrying the train of the favourite" (Mme. de Maintenon), "a duty which the queen herself did not exact of any officer in attendance." This strange man, as Commander of Languedoc, had a carpet spread, and his guards drawn up on either side when he went to mass in his official capacity, the *Grand Aumônier* being obliged to face his *prie-dieu*, and the mass being conducted with even greater pomp and ceremony than was exacted by the king—and his gracious majesty was not conspicuous for omitting the slightest detail that could add to the general impressiveness of his affairs. The other requirements of the maréchal were of the same contradictory and punctilious nature.

He was a typical courtier. The king, his idol, becoming *dévote*, he threw himself into a vortex of religion—high masses, vespers, morning prayers; he only withdrew from the odour of sanctity long enough to attend to the duties of his office, then hastened to con-

template relique and rosary anew. Despite this seeming piety, he had not utterly forsaken the flesh and the devil. Constant attendance at the *petits soupers* of certain fair but frail Aspasias, showed that he had in many ways an appetite far from ascetic, as with his boon companion, Raoul de Coudry, he sustained the reputation which, in his time, had made him a faithful imitator of his master *pro tem*, the regent. During his "Quartier," and as officer of the guard, he occupied the apartment directly underneath that of the king, which made him independent of domestic surveillance. Mme. de Noailles being a woman of much character, and one who paid no attention to the torrent of gossip pouring through the salons of Versailles, the maréchal was free to amuse himself as he chose; the latest fancy being a very pretty girl, the daughter of one of the king's musicians. A damsel so charming and attractive naturally made the gallant maréchal overlook those differences in rank which a less brave man might have found insurmountable. So solicitous for her comfort did he become, that the Cardinal de Noailles, arriving at his brother's *appartement* early one morning, and entering unannounced, was deeply grieved and pained at what he saw. . . . The maréchal hastily declared that he was ill and could not talk, at the same time threatening to kill the valet who allowed his brother to enter. The lady bashfully effaced herself behind a large bolster, and the cardinal withdrew, "sorrowing at what he beheld."

The maréchal tactfully and shamelessly paid his court to the low-born mistresses of monseigneur, this prince at the time being enamoured of Mlle. Roussin, an actress of some merit, and very beautiful. The lady falling ill, the maréchal sent constantly to ask how she was, "and to express his sympathy."

Despite these contradictory qualities, he was not, as the phrase goes, a bad man, though a better courtier than husband. He pleased his king, but many of his

traits did not please his wife. In a court governed by intrigues and mistresses, Mme. de Noailles ruled husband, children, family, and household affairs with a cheerfulness, freedom of spirit, and easiness which were admirable. "She was a woman of much character, and without sacrificing her self-respect had the tact to keep on terms of friendship with all parties at court."

Possessing his health and senses to the last, M. de Noailles was inconsolable at having to yield his post at court to his son, though his rank was in no way altered. At first, after this event, the guard used to stand at attention and present arms when the maréchal passed through the guard-room, but the king thought this a bad idea, and stopped it, "which was so insupportable to the spirit of the maréchal that from that day on he never passed through the room, going by the back courts and stairways when he wished to seek the *appartement* of his daughter, Mme. de Guiche." His illness was short and sharp. He died in the midst of his family, in the presence of the Duchesse de Bourgogne, "to whom all spectacles were amusing," and of the daughter of the king, who had come in while passing by. His brother the cardinal, had the unhappiness of seeing him die without being able to receive the Holy Sacrament, which the waiting priests had brought. The Duchesse de Noailles left the court, "where she seldom set foot, and never after the death of the king."

The next event in the *chronique scandaleuse*, varying the wars of the time and minor affairs of the family, was a scheme formed by the Duc de Noailles, son of the last duc, to give a mistress to the King of Spain, gossips Saint-Simon. In 1711 France was at war with Spain, and gained many victories, notably the capture of Gironne. This town had capitulated only after a furious attack and several days' sharp fighting, the final victory being gained by the French troops. The com-

mand of the vanquished city was given to the Marquis de Brancas, "to the scandal of all Spain." Soon after this de Noailles paid a visit to the Spanish court, first at Perpignan, then at Saragossa. It was during this visit that he and a friend, the Marquis d'Aguilar, perfected the above project. The lady on whom their choice fell was the celebrated Princesse d'Ursins (*née* de la Trémouille), who took the title of Princesse d'Ursins after the death of her second husband, the Duc de Braccociano. Mme. d'Ursins had long been a power at the Spanish court, from the influence she held over the queen. The Duc de Noailles and his friend, knowing her cleverness of intrigue, added to a nature which was not overscrupulous, hoped in the accomplishment of their design to gain an intimate knowledge of all the proceedings of the Spanish cabinet, thereby establishing a power behind the throne. The queen was beginning to suffer from a terrible disease which carried her to the tomb. Already had the ravages of scrofula, visible on her throat and the lower part of her face, necessitated a *coiffeur* which by its form could hide the disfigurement. This malady also kept her from accompanying the king to the chase, of which he was very fond, and on other journeys. Thus circumstances seemed to play into the hands of the conspirators. All went well for a time, but finally the Duc de Noailles growing bold, frightened the piety of the timid monarch with the dreadful word, "mistress," and so came the end of all the plotting. Philip, jealous, peevish, never allowing his wife out of his sight, insisting that her door should never be closed, interrupting her confessor if he thought the royal sins occupied too long a time in the telling, would have none of it, and so the duc returned to a court where the monarch was not too squeamish to call a spade a spade. The news of this intrigue having in some mysterious manner preceded him to Versailles, his reception was not so cordial as that usually accorded the successful

general returning from the wars. At least, so says Saint-Simon. In the voluminous letters of Mme. de Maintenon, mentioning the home-coming of the duc, there is not the slightest hint of anything but the most marked friendship and good feeling. But the intrigues of the day were too involved to be ravelled lightly, and Mme. de Maintenon and the Princesse d'Ursins were hand in glove, so to speak.

This duc was the most extraordinary of his race. Perhaps the greatest intriguer of a family celebrated for its intrigues, subtlety, and lust for power, "he was the lucky possessor of a gracious, ingratiating manner and that apparent sympathy which convinced that his sole desire was to further the interests of the petitioner. Gentle, gracious when it was to his advantage, and never for one instant losing sight of the end which he had in view, he possessed a genial wit which pleased without offending. His superb self-possession enabled him to converse with apparent unconcern, in the most trying circumstances, with as much *esprit* as he showed in the trivial exchange of compliment in the salons of Versailles or Marly. Under all this *bonhomie* there lurked a corrupt heart, harbouring an absolute contempt for virtue of any kind; and he, instead of blushing when caught in the act, calmly ignored the entire matter, meanwhile moving heaven and earth to compass his desires in another way. Neither friend nor foe were spared in those schemes to which he was eternally goaded by his insatiable ambition. No sacrifice of friendship or honour was too great, too shameful. He needed a clear path, and who opposed fell. Blessed with an ever ready and friendly word for all, prince or peasant alike; all the arts of wit, society, conversation, snares of confidence, friendship, hid one of those monsters that the poets loved to describe in the Tartars. An unfathomable depth of falseness, a natural perfidy, accustomed to play lightly with such trifles as life and honour, it was ambition which led him to com-

mit acts of the blackest ingratitude, the most incredible selfishness, and, by the very magnitude and immensity of his projects, awe the protesting victim into silence. So great was his imagination, so vast the multiplicity of his schemes, that he could not wait until one was successfully completed before beginning another; consequently, a head so filled with conflicting ideas was not always able to bring everything to the successful conclusion desired. It was this trait which, more than anything, hindered his military manœuvres. In the space of half an hour he would issue so many contradictory orders to his troops that they would be thrown into the most frightful confusion, not knowing whether to attack the enemy or start on the homeward march! He would work night and day on a pet project for eight days, perhaps a fortnight, heaven and earth being employed for its accomplishment, everything else utterly neglected; he lived, he breathed, but for it alone. Then, another scheme forming in his fertile brain, the same course was followed, to the utter abandonment of number one. He was a wonderful combination of strength and flightiness, mingled with impetuosity that carefully plotted pits for the unwary. The workings of his brain were impossible to follow, even in spirit. It took great patience and subtlety to manipulate the maze of threads controlling the tangled web of his affairs." One can only read the gossip of the times, pausing in wonder at some of those marvellous, mad projects, one of which was an attempt to persuade the regent to destroy and sell Marly-le-Roi, upon the plea that it was too expensive to maintain during the minority of the king. In this way the duc would have gained immense sums from the sale of the building materials. Though this was not done, a vast quantity of plate and linen disappeared from Marly during the regency, and the thieves were never traced! *O tempora! O mores!*

It is hard to believe that a gentleman so versatile and accomplished as M. le Duc was not gifted in an

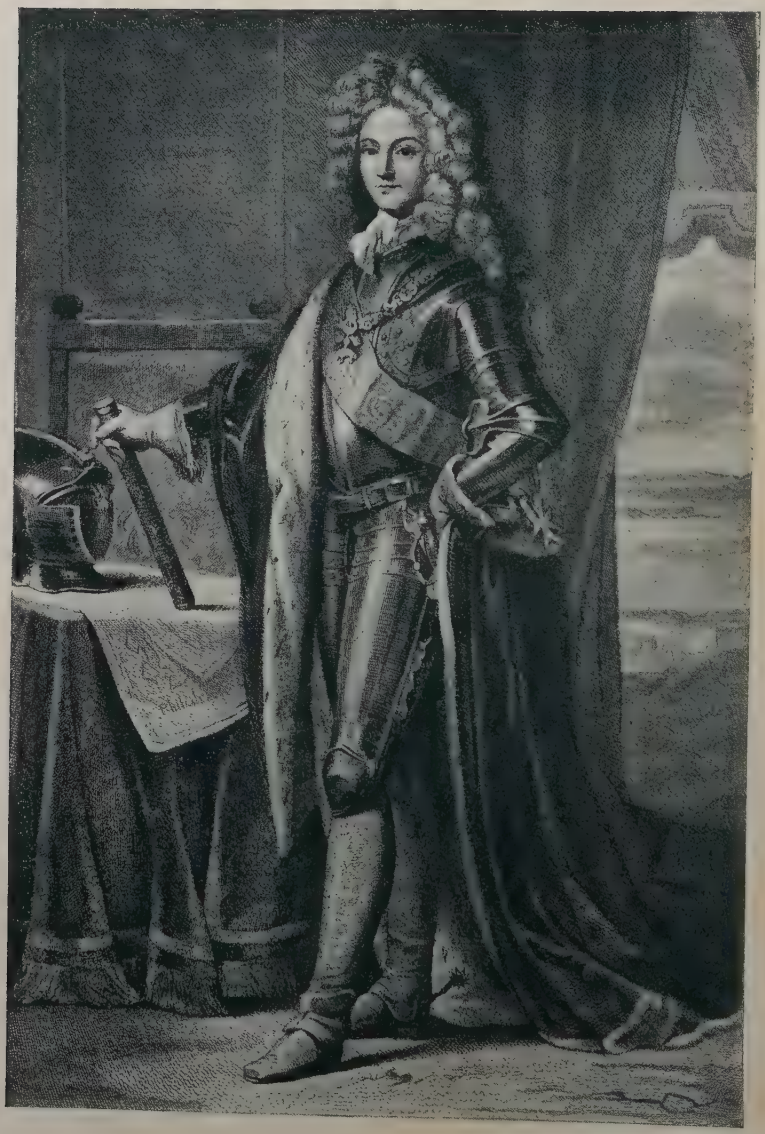
epistolary way. Indeed, so slight was his skill that he was "incapable of drawing up a readable petition, so many were the blunders, faults, and corrections, that the finished document was totally illegible, as well as incomprehensible from the confusion of ideas it contained. He passed days and nights closeted with his secretaries, and, when having some particular project in view, would have the document composed by an obscure or unknown clerk, whom he kept under lock and key in a remote garret." The disciple of Saint-Nicholas was made to rewrite and recompose the document many times, until it quite suited the fancy of his noble patron, "who, calmly taking the finished production, which he unblushingly displayed everywhere as his, departed highly satisfied."

"A man of such open and ingenuous manner seemed especially made to throw dust in the eyes of all," and "to make the worst appear the better part." He was usually able to convince even the most sceptical of the integrity of his intention, "being one of those whom Nature destined for a great criminal, had not his social position prevented. The serpent who tempted Eve, and through her overthrew Adam, and so lost the human family, was the original faithfully copied by the Duc de Noailles. The most exact, the most perfect imitation, as much as a man could approach a spirit of the first rank of the fallen angels." It is strange, possessing as he did the *entrée* and intimacy at court and everywhere he wished, that he did not have the talent of making friends. Even his duplicity could not bind others to his interests. Over his sister, Mme. de Guiche, he never obtained the slightest influence, much to his chagrin, for she was a favourite of Mme. de Maintenon, and could have done much to aid her brother, had she willed. His marvellous adaptability made him equally at ease in the society of his boon companions, with the ministers of state, or in those dainty and famous boudoirs where his mastery of the

jargon des femmes enabled him to discuss intelligently the newest mode in hairdressing, *chiffons*, or the all-absorbing topic of *enfilage*, with a facility very pleasing to the fair sex. Another vagary of this kaleidoscopic character was his love of collecting books, of which he formed a great library, taking the greatest pleasure in honouring the literary lights of the day. His most dominating trait was, undoubtedly, an insatiable thirst for power, "a soldier's love of plunder and glory, and a desire to be first in everything." He remains an incomprehensible enigma, not to be judged by the standard of our times. He died in 1723.

The next duc was not so noted as his predecessor, having the negative distinction of leading the French troops to defeat at the battle of Dettingen in 1723. This action, where George II at the head of the English and Hanoverians achieved a victory—not the first gained on French territory—was the last in which a king of England personally appeared on the battlefield. Never since has the presence of the Lord's Anointed cheered his faithful soldiers to glory.

This duc was succeeded by his son, Jean Paul François, Duc d'Ayen, afterward Duc de Noailles, born October 1, 1739, married January 5, 1755, died 1824. He was the father of Mme. de Lafayette. On his grandfather's death in 1766 he became Duc d'Ayen, and Duc de Noailles on his father's, in 1793. He is chiefly interesting from his connection and relationship with his justly celebrated daughter. Like most of his family, he went into the army; unlike them, the pursuit of the philosopher's stone was more congenial to his unmartial mind than the blare of the bugle. He acquired much renown in his pursuits, being elected a member of the Academy of Sciences in 1777. According to Mme. du Barri, he was one of the wits of the court, but "malicious, and a fiend." The estimable countess may have been slightly biassed in her estimation of his talents, as he, in return, detested, and never lost an



SECOND MARÉCHAL DE NOAILLES. MARRIED MLLE. AUBIGNE
1698, DIED 1766
GREAT-GRANDFATHER OF MME. DE LAFAYETTE
From the collection of the author

opportunity of putting her in a false or embarrassing position. She also declares "he was stupid, like all his race." He possessed the confidence of his sovereign, as had his father and grandfather before him; a confidence of intimacy, which had caused the superstitious husband of Mme. de Maintenon to desire the —contemporary—duc to accompany them in a nocturnal expedition to a necromancer, and, so veiled in mystery were the doings of that evening, so eternal the secrecy maintained, that the details of the affair were never even alluded to by the interested parties.

This duc, when but sixteen, married the gentle and pious Anne Louise Henriette d'Agusseau, nearly two years his senior, and thenceforth lived the usual life of his contemporaries. He spent much time at court, then under the sway of the Pompadour and her successors, where his "Quartier" and duty as captain of the guard compelled him to live for three months of each year. This being over, he found the luxurious boudoirs of Versailles lounging places greatly to his taste, being accustomed from his childhood to the artificial and rather exotic atmosphere surrounding royalty, which was so different from the quiet domesticity preferred by Mme. d'Ayen. He was, perhaps, a selfish man, though fond and thoughtful of his wife, whom he deeply respected. She detested the court, and this led to their seeing less of one another than would have been the case had he married a woman of less exalted nature. Ever ready to counsel and advise her on matters which she referred to his judgment, he was yet happier at the court than beneath the domestic eaves. She, with her somewhat peculiar characteristics, was not of the temperament to render him those little attentions, to administer the delicate flatteries necessary to amuse and hold the devotion of most men, and particularly one who had always been spoiled and eagerly welcomed by *ces dames* whose rustling brocades have descended to us less tattered than their reputations. He

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played little part in the bringing up of his children, being rarely mentioned by them. He defended his king on the terrible tenth of August, shortly afterward fleeing to Switzerland, where he lived until the Restoration, returning to France in 1814. Is it unjust to condemn unheard the conduct of one who can no longer defend himself, who fled while his family remained? Did he try to obtain the release of Adrienne from the dungeons of Olmütz? Did he try to rescue his wife and daughter and his mother from the prisons of the Revolution? Things in France were so upset then that the news of their execution came to him as a thunderbolt, while he was still ignorant of their danger. No effort on his part would have availed with the reigning powers of the day. His very name would have made the plea for clemency into an instantaneous death warrant for those he loved, so fanatic were the Terrorists. Of his immense fortune nothing remained to him. He lived, while in Switzerland, a life of the greatest simplicity, and formed a friendship with the Countess Golowskin, whom he married in 1795. So changed was he by his misfortunes that a few months after receiving the news of Mme. d'Ayen's death, his daughter, Mme. de Montagu, did not recognise him except by the sound of his voice! He returned to France at the time of the Restoration to attend to his business affairs, living henceforth between France and Switzerland. He left no son, his title going to his grandnephew, Paul, born in 1808. His father, the Duc de Noailles, by dying in August, 1794, narrowly escaped the fate of his friends and associates who fell before the Terror.

There is another, a younger branch of the Noailles, not to be omitted, as it furnished history for the time. Philippe (1715–94) was a younger brother of the fourth duc, and very much more distinguished as a soldier, receiving the *bâton* of maréchal on the same day as his brother. He was known henceforth as the Maré-

chal de Mouchy, serving at court, as on the field, with advantage and distinction to himself. A man of great tact and adaptability, he drifted with the strongest tide, was ever ready to congratulate or condole. When the king, Louis XV, wedded the obscure princesse, his wife, Mme. la Comtesse de Noailles (*née* d'Arpajon) was appointed first *dame d'honneur*, which post she filled for many years until the death of Marie Leczinska. The perquisites of the first *dame d'honneur* were numerous enough to fill an ample volume in their enumeration, and it is interesting to note how, on the death of his queen, " the whole of her chamber furnishings were given to the Comtesse de Noailles, with the exception of two large rock-crystal lustres, which Louis declared should be preserved as appurtenances of the Crown," otherwise they would have been items in the spoil of Mme. de Noailles.

In Marie Leczinska the countess found a kindred soul, for the Polish princesse was a martinet in the petty etiquette of her court. The following anecdote is in itself amusing, and shows the feelings of her royal mistress for Mme. de Noailles: " The Queen delighted in the art of painting," says Mme. de Campan, " and imagined she herself could draw and paint; she had a drawing-master who passed all his time in her cabinet. She undertook to paint four large Chinese pictures, with which she wished to ornament her private drawing-room, which was richly furnished with rare *porcelaine* and the finest marbles. This painter was intrusted with the landscape and the background of the picture; he drew the figures with a pencil; the faces and arms were also left by the Queen to his execution; she reserved to herself nothing but the draperies and the least important accessories. The Queen every morning filled up the outline marked out for her with a little red, blue, or green colour, which the master prepared on the palette and even filled her pencil with, constantly repeating, ' Higher up, Madame, lower down, Madame, a

little to the right, more to the left.' After an hour's work, the time for hearing Mass, or some other pious or family duty would interrupt her Majesty; and the painter, putting the shadows into the draperies she had painted, softening off the colours where she had laid too much, etc., finished the small figures. When the work was completed the drawing-room was decorated with her Majesty's work, and the firm persuasion of this good Queen that she had painted it herself was so entire that she left this cabinet, with all its furniture and paintings to the Comtesse de Noailles, her lady of honour. She added to the bequest, 'The pictures in my cabinet being my own work, I hope the Comtesse de Noailles will preserve them for my sake!' Mme. de Noailles, afterward Maréchale de Mouchy, had a new additional pavilion constructed in her hôtel in the Faubourg Saint Germain, in order to form a suitable receptacle for the Queen's legacy; and the following inscription placed over the door in letters of gold: 'The innocent falsehood of a good Princesse.'"

Between the time of the queen's death and the arrival of the Archduchesse Marie Antoinette at Versailles, Mme. de Noailles played but the ordinary part of a court lady. Some time after the installation of the du Barri at the palace, there was a fierce battle, caused by the command of the king that the Maréchal de Mouchy, then governor of the palace, and Mme. la Maréchale, should surrender their *appartements* to the favourite. The indignation of the disturbed maréchale was too great for words. Had not the old lady been controlled by her favourite etiquette, there is no knowing what might have been the consequences to her sovereign! But the storm passed over, and to this cause la du Barri ascribes the hatred in which she was always held by all branches of the Noailles family. When Marie Antoinette came to France as its dauphiness, it was Mme. de Noailles who was sent to welcome and conduct the young princesse to court. Of that, and the

personality of Mme. l'Étiquette, let her contemporary, Mme. de Campan speak:

"As the customary etiquette prescribed, there had been a sumptuous pavilion erected at Kell, near the frontier, in which the Princesse was undressed, so that she might retain nothing belonging to a foreign court, the discarded finery becoming the property of the first lady of honour. The doors were opened, the young Princesse came forward, looking for the Comtesse de Noailles; then running into her arms, implored her, with tears in her eyes, to direct and counsel her.

"While doing justice to the virtues of the Comtesse de Noailles, those sincerely attached to the Queen have always considered it as one of the earliest misfortunes of the latter not to have found in the person assigned to her for advice an intelligent and enlightened woman, administering good counsel with that sweetness which engages young persons to follow it. The Comtesse de Noailles had nothing affable in her appearance; her demeanour was stiff and severe. She perpetually tormented the Dauphiness with remonstrances, without explaining to that fifteen-year-old princesse the origin and necessity of many customs, wearisome, heaven knows! which confronted her on her arrival at the French court. For instance, the custom of having ladies of honour and gentlemen ushers, and that of wearing hoops of three ells in circumference, were certainly invented to entrench young princesses so respectably, that the malicious gaiety of the French, their proneness to insinuations, and too often to calumny, should not by any possibility find opportunity to attack them.

"The Comtesse possessed abundance of good qualities, charity, piety, and irreproachable morals rendering her worthy of reverence; but, with all that frivolity could add even to the noblest qualifications, the Comtesse was abundantly provided. Etiquette was to her a kind of atmosphere; at the slightest derangement of

the prescribed order of things, it might be said she was on the point of being suffocated." She was, very probably, a conceited, tiresome, and pedantic old lady, who used to quote the late queen and her doings at all times, by way of precedent. "One day the Maréchale de Noailles was teasing her (Marie Antoinette) with questions relative to the extent which she would allow the ladies the option of taking off or wearing their cloaks, and of pinning up the lappets of their caps, or letting them hang down. The Queen replied to her, in my presence: 'Arrange all those matters, Madame, just as you please, but do not imagine that a Queen of France, born Archduchess of Austria, can attach that importance to them which might be felt by a Polish Princess who had become Queen of France.'"

Another cause of grievance on the part of Mme. de Noailles was the friendship which the queen displayed for the Comtesse Jules de Polignac. This young woman was "of middle size, very fair complexion, dark brown hair, beautiful teeth and smile, sweet disposition, no presumption, disliked dress, and of the most simple attire. I do not think I ever saw diamonds about her, even at the highest pitch of fortune, when she enjoyed the rank of Duchesse at court," says Mme. de Campan. "It was necessary that the Comtesse, who was not rich, should be suitably established at court; the place of first Equerry, in reversion, after the Comte de Tessé being given to Comte Jules, unknown to the holder, displeased the family of Noailles," with whom they were intermarried. This family had just sustained another mortification; the appointment of the Princesse de Lamballe having in some degree rendered the resignation of the Comtesse de Noailles necessary, whose husband was thereupon made a maréchal de France, with the title of Maréchal de Mouchy. The queen's great fancy, mingled with pity, for the lovely eighteen-year-old widow, who had first appeared at one of the queen's sledge parties, had de-

termined her to revive in her favour the office of superintendent of the household, which had not been in existence since the death of Mlle. de Clermont. "It is said that Marie Leczinska had decided that this place should continue vacant, the superintendent having so extensive a power in the household of the Queens, as to be frequently a restraint upon their inclinations."

M. and Mme. de Mouchy, poor old souls! paid dearly for their loyalty, being beheaded on June 27, 1794, by order of the Revolutionary Committee. Even to the last conforming to that etiquette which was their fetish, for their young sovereigns had preceded them to their ghastly fate!

The sons of the Maréchal de Mouchy, the Prince de Poix and the Vicomte de Noailles, became members of the Constitutional Assembly, the former, who was a captain in the body guards, sat at the right side of the assembly, afterward emigrating in 1793. He lived to return in 1814, when he became a lieutenant general. His brother, Louis Victor de Noailles (1754–1804), second son of the Maréchal de Mouchy, was the most distinguished of his family. He went to America in the company of the Comte de Rochambeau, serving brilliantly under his brother-in-law, Lafayette, the husband of his cousin, Adrienne de Noailles. It was he who concluded the final details of the capitulation of Yorktown, in the war of American independence. After this, he saw considerable service in the West Indies, in 1789 was elected to the States General, becoming so imbued with the intoxication of liberty as to be one of the first who began that "orgie," to quote Mirabeau, abolishing all privileges of nobility, and, with the Duc d'Aiguillon, proposed the abolition of titles and liveries, in June, 1790.

It is hard to conceive how a man could be so eager to destroy what had been so great a part of his life; what had been the life, the very breath, the traditions of centuries of ancestors . . . perhaps it was hot-

headed foolishness, perhaps policy, for life was fair, and it was easier to drift with the tide than breast the raging torrent of the day. He was not an extremist; and, when the flood of blood poured over the land in the name of *La Liberté*, he emigrated to America. The Terror had robbed him of wife, of home, of relations. He went to Philadelphia and became a partner in Bingham's Bank, which was very well known at the time, living in that city for some years. But the commonplace life was wearying, and, though he prospered amazingly, the yearning for France could not be stifled. He returned, accepting a commission under his early comrade, Rochambeau, to fight against the English at San Domingo, where he took part in several brilliant engagements.

"There being no French force to blockade at Cape François, Commodore Long bore up for the Mole of San Nicholas, to treat with M. de Noailles, the French General in command there. On the second of December (1804) a proposition to that effect was made, but the General declined, according to the terms, alleging that he had provisions for five months, and would not surrender until the last extremity. The *Bellerophon* then proceeded with the prizes and prisoners to Jamaica. On the very night on which the blockade of the Mole was raised, General Noailles, having previously made his arrangements, sallied out of the port with his garrison, contained in several small vessels, and arrived in safety at the island of Cuba." Among the French "Victoires et Conquêtes," recorded in a work bearing that title, is an extraordinary one, performed by M. de Noailles on his short voyage to Cuba. It seems that "*une corvette Anglaise*"—the *Hasard*—"crossed the path of his brig"—the *Courrier*—"on December 31, 1803, near Grande Neuvita, and hailed her to know if the General Noailles was on board. The French brig concealed her numerous crew, and, hoisting the English colours, declared that she had been sent

to intercept the General and his garrison. The two vessels then steered in company, and, in the night General Noailles, at the head of twenty grenadiers, gallantly leaped on board of, and after a short resistance, carried the *Corvette Anglaise*. The conqueror proceeded with his prize to Havana, but unfortunately, died shortly afterwards of the wounds received in the action." Thus died, on January 9, 1803, one of the most daring and most chastened by sorrow of that proud race, the friend of liberty and of Lafayette, Louis, Vicomte de Noailles, in the forty-eighth year of his age. His heart was enclosed in a silver case by his grenadiers and carried to France, wrapped in the colours of his regiment.

CHAPTER VI

THE causes which led to that overwhelming revolution of bloodshed and terror were not the grievances of a month, of a year, or of years, but almost of centuries. There were, of course, even in the Middle Ages of France, lords famed for their honest uprightness, their justice to all, be he prince or serf, but these were in the minority. The time of the noble was too much occupied in going to war, keeping his household goods and chattels out of the grasp of his friend and neighbour, and in resting between wars, to have much time to take up philanthropy, even had it been fashionable, which it was not. The condition of his vassals was as good as in the days of his father, perhaps a little better than it had been in those of his grandfather. Why meddle with Jacques Bonhomme?

That Henri IV owes much of his vogue as a popular hero to his well-known utterance of the desire that each one of his subjects should be able to have a "fowl in the pot at least once a week," there is little doubt. He touched the chord which unites all mankind, for we

> May live without love; what is passion but pining?
> But where is the man who can live without dining?

So great was his popularity that when all the royal tombs were broken open and their dust scattered to the mob, his was left intact, though his statue on the Pont Neuf went the way of other emblems of royalty. Had Henri IV lived longer, it would have meant much for

the prosperity of France. His unfortunate and premature death put the country under the regency of his second wife, Marie de Médicis, who, silly, vain, and irresolute creature, was ruled by her waiting woman, Eleanor, in turn the mouthpiece of Concini, her husband. France, tossed to and fro at the whim of capricious favourites, owes what steadiness she had to the grim guidance of old Sully, but, quarrelling with him for an honestly outspoken opinion, Marie de Médicis dismissed him, consoling herself with the honeyed flattery of favourites.

France at this moment was in a sad state. The power of the nobles had become so exaggerated, and their insolence so brazen, that they neither recognised nor pretended to obey their sovereign. Like a family of peevish and spoiled children, they openly sulked, if crossed in any way, absenting themselves from the court and not being affable again until pacified by their weak queen with enormous bribes in the form of money. And these were some of the first men in France! The wars of the Fronde disorganised the country for years. The king was nothing; Richelieu, the state. He curtailed the power of the nobles; levelled their strongholds to the ground. He established courts of justice where, for the first time, the poor man, the peasant, might be heard, but he did nothing to lighten the outrageous burden of taxation from which the masses suffered. Richelieu was the embodied spirit of autocracy, but he was just. His successor, Mazarin, the son of a poor Italian fisherman, afterward secretly married to Anne of Austria, was hated by noble and peasant alike. He ruled the queen by a rod of iron. When Louis XIII died his son was but five years old. The country was in a most unsettled state from the wars, the credit of the king so low that he could not borrow money at less than *twenty-five per cent*! The reform party, called the Fronde, attempted much, achieved little, being finally very badly frightened by

the news from England of the murder of unhappy Charles Stuart by the axe of the Commonwealth. This unfortunate monarch was the uncle by marriage of the young French king, and, fearing that they might stir up more of a tempest than they could control, the Frondeurs quieted down, and were not heard of very much for a long period. Its leaders accomplished nothing, but the Fronde took a hold on the popular fancy, and the masses caused many disturbances in the various towns and cities of France. The country people and peasants took no part in the doings of the rabble, but, poor unfortunates! suffered on every side from the pillaging mobs of their countrymen and the attacks of numerous bands of mercenaries, lured like the crows and buzzards by the hope of carrion.

To the loyal subjects of the kingdom, Louis XIV was proclaimed king, the regency being over. He was absolute master. This policy he carried through his long reign of threescore and ten years. He was the *Roi Soleil*, a veritable god among men. He brought France to a height of ostentatious glory never before attained. The pageants of his court eclipsed those of other monarchs, as did the graceful dancing of the young king put to shame the hobblings of his war-worn generals when they awkwardly attempted to pace through minuets on those glass-like floors. France was at once the cynosure and the envy of all the world. The life at the court at that time is well known. It was an oasis of glittering ceremony in the midst of a starving people. The nobles yawned and chafed at their gilded chains, yet dared not go. Their estates were left in the hands of dishonest overseers, who grew rich, while the revenues of their masters diminished. No one lived within his means; play ruined thousands; they hoped for favours from their sovereign to make them rich once more . . . and hung around—waiting.

"At what time shall I call your lordship?" a ser-

vant of the Duc de Noailles asked his master, who was retiring.

"At ten o'clock, if no one dies meanwhile," replied the duc. "But should any one happen to die, call me earlier, that I may beg his place!" This anecdote is a fair illustration of the prevailing sentiment of the day!

The reign of the fourteenth Louis was the most gorgeous ever known, but it was a "kingdom built upon a foundation of sand": a colossal gilded statue, with a crumbling wooden heart. The monuments of his time are magnificent; was there another Versailles with its treasures of art and history, a Fontainebleau, a Marly? Who has not marvelled at the mind which planned these splendours—creating the stately beauties of Versailles from a barren plain? Its terraces, its very stones are peopled with history. Imagination conjures, at the twilight of a summer day, when the orange flowers scent the air, and the shadows begin to race with each other, the presence of sweet-faced La Vallière, conscious always of her slightly halting step, walking slowly to and fro as she waited for her monarch. How the quick blood flies to her face as she hears his imperious voice; how it fades again as she sees him approaching, jesting with her triumphant rival, her successor, Montespan! . . . a hypocritical figure glides in the shadow, the cat-like and cruel Maintenon, with her familiar, that evil genius of France, the Jesuit, concealing beneath his sombre *soutane* the ever-ready document awaiting the signature of a doting and superstitious monarch. Foolish king, to drive some of the bravest and best from your kingdom at the whim of a bigoted woman! . . . The patter and click of high-heeled silk shoes, heavy with jewelled buckles, the half-wafted scent, the rustle of brocade . . . a scarf conceals the lowered face; may it not be the du Barri, hastening to a *rendezvous* with other than her kingly lover? He was old; she was young, pleasure-loving,

and the habits of her early life had not taught her to be faithful to one alone. Women were made to be loved, while man lived . . . *que voulez vous*?

What heart does not throb with choking anxiety in the little passage by which Marie Antoinette fled, half-dressed, to the chamber of the king on that fearful morning of October 6th? . . . and the dimness of the chapel seems filled with masses of murmuring wraiths, gossiping maliciously, as they waited for the ceremony which would bind the dauphin to the child of Maria Theresa . . . all ghosts . . . if those age-stained walls could only speak!

Brilliant as was this picture, the reverse of the canvas struck chill and hopeless. For a long period after Colbert had by treachery supplanted the lavish Fouquet, he was able, by many reforms and economies, to procure plenty of money; but toward the end of his administration, having supplied almost incredible sums, he was obliged to confess that he knew no longer where to turn for more. Louis's reply, "that Kings give by spending," was not so heartless as it sounds, but it shows that he had little idea of the misery in which his subjects existed. La Bruyère described the farm labourers as "ferocious animals. Black, livid, sunburnt, they seem to be for ever grubbing in the earth; they seem to have an articulate voice; and when they stand erect they exhibit human features." Thirty thousand peasants in one province were obliged to "eat weeds and the vilest refuse, and many women and children have been found dead on the roadsides and in the fields with their mouths full of grass." And this when the king daily wearied his Gargantuan appetite with feasts of Lucullus! That mad policy which allowed a superstitious hypocrite, a scheming woman, to exile thousands of loyal Protestant subjects, men of letters, and skilled artisans, the backbone of a country; which permitted a re-establishment of religious persecution, shameful, even for the Middle Ages; the insane infatu-

ation of the king for himself and his greatness—well justified the remark of the Queen of Sweden, "He has cut off his left hand with his right." He made war on all Europe, he quarrelled with the Pope. Those persecuted and exiled Huguenots manned the ships which defeated his navy. It was a just retribution. His reign ended miserably. Such was the joy of the people that they built booths, bonfires, had puppet shows, and all manner of rejoicings along the route of the funeral procession, wending slowly toward St. Denis. They cheered and hooted the body of their king, which caused the officers and courtiers following the royal catafalque to hurry the order of progression lest there should be a disturbance which they would be unable to control.

Louis XV, a weak and delicate child, succeeded his grandfather at the age of five. He was confronted by a dissatisfied kingdom and a starving peasantry; also by a debt of nearly two thousand five hundred millions of francs, equal to almost twice that amount at the present value of money. The long regency of the Duc d'Orléans, with its "Mississippi Bubble," only increased the critical state of affairs. Unfortunately, the habits of the young king, to whom had been given the title of *Bien Aimé* during the war in the Netherlands, when he was very ill, were not such as were likely to restore the country to a firm financial basis. The caprices of his favourites drained the treasury. He tried every method of speculation. He instituted the infamous *Pact de famine*, which meant that he bought all the available grain in France, stored it away, waited till his loyal subjects were driven to starvation, and then sold it to them at enormous prices! He would have been a shining light to the modern school of finance! The papers of the time give some quaint and amusing notes on the subject. The *Gentleman's Magazine* on April 22, 1799, says: "A terrible insurrection happened at Rouen, in France, on account of the high price of Pro-

visions. They have exported corn from the coast of Normandy and Picardy till the poor of these provinces want bread themselves, so predominant is the love of gain." In the same magazine, in May, 1775, one year after the *Bien Aimé's* death, is the news that: "Insurrections have been general in France on account of the dearness of corn. May the ring leaders soon be seized and executed without trial—but the cry for bread is still unanswered!" Then, on May 31st in the same year: "Fourteen of the insurgents, who lately committed some disorder in France on account of the high price of bread, were executed in the court yard belonging to the country seat of Mme. de Rouvray, which they had plundered since this happened." That his most Christian Majesty was hard pressed and driven to expedients, may be surmised by the edifying bulletin which follows, from the same gossiping periodical for August 6, 1771:

"An edict was published at Paris imposing an additional tax of twenty sols on the head of every hog or sow brought into the city for the consumption of the inhabitants. This edict has occasioned many puns, witticisms, and ballads, which, however, the police took no notice of; the prisons being already full as the hospitals, it was judged well to be sparing in this article as well as in many others.

"As the hogs are not killed in Paris, but brought to town in loads without their garbage, and ready for sale, one of the undertakers for supplying the town was driving his loaded carts into Paris, but had the precaution first to cut off the heads, which he had left at home. When he arrived at the barrier, the clerks demanded the new duty, he presented them the Edict, which specified the heads only; he bid them search, and if they found one single head he consented they should seize the whole. The clerks laughed at the joke, but insisted that the hogs should not be brought in until the Edict was put in execution, and the new tax paid. The un-

dertaker sent for an attorney and deposited the duty, which the attorney protested against, in order to prevent their disposing of the money until such time as the law should pronounce concerning the validity or invalidity of the Edict." Thus do we see to what straits the king was put to get money. What the final decision in the case was would be interesting to know. "From the sublime to the ridiculous" might be a suitable motto for the money-raising schemes of this reign. Ending, or nearly the end, with the edict on those useful domestic animals; one of the early edicts had been issued on July 26th, with this announcement:

"His Majesty ordains that such of his subjects as have obtained the rights and privileges of nobility since 1715, by virtue of the office they have enjoyed, shall be confirmed in them on their paying, each of them, 6,000 livres at two sols to the livre, and their wives, children, or descendants are to enjoy the same on their paying proportional sums, according to the degrees they respectively stand in to the deceased."

"The Jews of Alsace" at this moment offered to the king fifty millions of livres for leave to settle in Paris and enjoy the privileges of natives, "and that they may be allowed a place of worship." Hard pressed as he was, it is probable that the king greedily gobbled up the bribe, never being—when well—at all troubled by religious scruples.

In May, 1774, an attack of smallpox, contracted in a manner not creditable to the king, carried the elderly reprobate to his unregretted grave. The usual ceremonies of the royal embalming were omitted, as the condition of the body was frightful, and a menace to those approaching it. When the news of Louis XV's death was carried to his grandson and the dauphiness, they fell on their knees, exclaiming: "God help us and protect us; we are too young to reign!" Like others, they suffered for the sins of their fathers. The discontent and misery of generations was about to break

forth. It was incessantly fanned by that class of men whose trade is revolution. Left to himself, the peasant had not the brain to organise and command others; he followed where he was led. The king was but the plaything of circumstances, but he reigned at a time when no man could battle the conditions . . . he was an object of pity rather than censure.

CHAPTER VII

SHARPLY contrasted with the turmoil of the times, the peaceful household of the Duchesse d'Ayen presented a picture long to be remembered. With her loving daughters about her, happy in the birth of her first grandchild, for the year following the marriage of Adrienne to M. de Lafayette, her mother busied herself in completing the religious education which so early a marriage had left unfinished. In her sixteenth year Adrienne made her first communion, and, on December 15, 1775, the same year, her first child, a daughter, named Henriette for Mme. d'Ayen, was born.

Surrounded by all those dear to her, enraptured in the birth of her child—an exceptionally wonderful babe, who bid fair to outshine all other infants of her acquaintance—the young mother's cup seemed full. There was not room for another drop of joy! Inheriting, as she did, that wonderful love of children, the predominant trait of her mother, Adrienne—in reality a child herself—found such happiness in the nursery that she could with difficulty at times be coaxed from its peaceful retirement to take her part in those social frivolities which, by virtue of birth and position, she was forced to attend. " Mme. l'Étiquette " insisted that she should sometimes appear at court, declaring that it was a sin and a shame for a mere child to bury herself alive, as though she was an old and ugly woman! As for the wonderful infant, Henriette, why the child had her nurses; it was not wise to give all one's time to a baby; she, " Mme. l'Etiquette " had

six, and not one had, even for a moment, ever been allowed to interfere with the slightest detail of Mme. de Mouchy's life! So Adrienne went sometimes to the Petit Trianon, which she liked better than the stately formalities of Versailles, mingling in a few of the many pleasure parties; after which, oh, how gladly! she flew home to the nursery and the wonderful Henriette with redoubled vigour. Utterly absorbed in her simple, all-sufficient happiness, she felt no foreboding of the awful storm which was to blast her happy life, and sweep fair France with fire and sorrow.

To the court of Versailles at this time came one Benjamin Franklin, a homely, solid, and quiet man sent from the partisans of liberty across the sea, to ask aid from the French. He became uproariously popular at once. Everything which the human fancy can conceive was named after him, even including a stove! Hats, canes, scarfs *à la Franklin* were the mode of the hour. There is the indisputable fact that he owes a great measure of his popularity to the ever fickle French being charmed to annoy and irritate (according to their ideas) "perfide Albion." However, he succeeded in inflaming the nation with the *ignis fatuus* of liberty, and took as a gift from that heavily taxed and groaning country, 9,000,000 francs, arranging a loan of 15,000,000 more. This negotiation was not accomplished at once, but occupied some considerable time. Enthusiast among the enthusiastic, first in every plan to aid those across the ocean, was Lafayette. His head was turned, and he was wild to go to America. He consulted older and wiser men; they dissuaded him, his king forbade him, but all to no purpose. That friend of his family, the Duc de Broglie, said to the youthful Don Quixote: "I have seen your uncle die in the wars of Italy, I witnessed your father's death at the battle of Minden, and I will not be accessory to the death of the only remaining branch of the family."

Lafayette would not be persuaded. As he wrote to

a friend about this time, "At the first news of the quarrel, my heart was enrolled in it." Taking a purely impartial view of the matter, Lafayette had everything to keep him in France: position, a wife by whom he was passionately loved, a child. On all sides he was implored not to go. If Lafayette had never set foot upon the shores of America the cause of liberty would have been fought, would have triumphed. There is no particular feat of generalship by which he saved the day—no crisis at which his presence alone prevented the cause from being lost. Lafayette, as a man, stands foremost of his day. He was an exemplary husband of affectionate nature; but he was primarily a patriot, and one utterly incorruptible. He loved his country before all other considerations; before his country he loved liberty; but this very love made him selfish. He naturally felt some regret at leaving home, wife, and friends on an uncertain mission, but neither their prayers, tears, nor entreaties were able to overcome his zeal for the cause of freedom and his great ambition. He was mad to go. Not the dangerous condition of his wife's health, to whom the shock and grief of his departure might cause serious complications of a possibly fatal nature to ensue, for one moment detained him. His brother-in-law, the Vicomte de Noailles, was prevented from accompanying him at the time, as his fortune was not at his own disposition. But Lafayette was independent of every one on earth. He was rich, and burned with chivalric ardour to fight for the oppressed as, in the days of yore, his ancestors had "slain their thousands" in response to the waving riband of captive beauty. A dead hero is in a measure immune from criticism, but it is more than probable that the indignant relations and erstwhile guardian of this impetuous youth made remarks in the privacy of their apartments in which the phrase "Young fool!" and various denominations of that faithful animal recorded as belonging to Balaam were prominent.

This love of liberty and republicanism led to some rather amusing actions on the part of the marquis. After his marriage his new connections had wished to obtain for him a place at court, in the household of the Comte de Provence, afterward Louis XVIII. "I did not hesitate displeasing them," he writes, "to preserve my independence." To prevent this, without openly opposing the will of those he loved, he managed in the following manner to offend the prince to whose person they wished to attach him. "Having met the Comte at a masquerade ball, and recognising him under his mask, in the conversation which then ensued the Comte endeavouring to display his memory to advantage, Lafayette remarked, 'That it was unnecessary to take so much trouble to prove that memory was the wit of fools.'" The Comte, learning later that the marquis had been aware of his incognito, never forgave him, and the matter ended. Ended, indeed, for a reconciliation never took place between Lafayette and that prince, later king.

So much and such bitter opposition to his cherished projects made the youth of nineteen complete all his preparations with the greatest secrecy. He was forbidden by those in authority to leave France. Previous to his final departure for America, he spent some time in London, from where the following letter to his father-in-law will serve to explain the state of his feelings:

London, March 9, 1777.

"You will be astonished, my dear father, at the news I am on the point of giving you; it has cost me far more than I can express not to consult you. My respect and affection for you, as well as my great confidence in you, must convince you of the truth of this assertion; but my word was given, and you would not have esteemed me had I broken it; the step I am now taking will at least prove to you, I hope, the goodness

of my intentions. I have found a particular opportunity of distinguishing myself and of learning a soldier's trade. I am a general officer in the Army of the United States of America. The frankness of my conduct, and my zeal in their service, have completely won their confidence. I have done on my side all I could do for them, and their interests will ever be dearer to me than my own. In short, my dear father, I am at this moment in London anxiously awaiting letters from my friends; upon receiving them I shall set off from hence, and, without stopping at Paris, I shall embark in a vessel that I have myself purchased and chartered. My travelling companions are the Baron de Kalb, a very distinguished officer, Brigadier in the King's service, and Major General, as well as myself in the United States Army, and some other excellent officers who have kindly consented to share the chances of my fate. I am rejoiced at having found such a glorious opportunity of occupying myself and of acquiring knowledge. I am conscious that I am making an immense sacrifice, and that to quit my family, my friends, and you, my dearest father, costs me more than it could do any other person, because I love you all far more than any other person ever loved his friends. But this voyage will not be a very long one; we see every day far longer journeys taken for amusement only, and I hope also to return more worthy of all those who are kind enough to regret my absence. Adieu, my dear father, I hope I shall soon see you again. Retain your affection for me; I ardently desire to merit it—nay, I do merit it already from my warm affection toward you, and from the respect that, during the remainder of his life will be felt for you by Your affectionate son,

"LAFAYETTE."

. . . . .

The spring of the year 1777 brought much sorrow to that happy household. In April the plans of going

to America were fully completed and announced by Lafayette to his family. "I loved him tenderly," wrote his wife. "On hearing the news my father and all the family fell into a state of violent anger. My mother, dreading these emotions for me on account of the state of health I was in, alarmed at the dangers her dearly beloved son had gone to seek so far, having herself less than anybody in the world the thirst for ambition and of worldly glory or a taste for enterprise, appreciated, nevertheless, M. de Lafayette's conduct as it was two years later appreciated by the rest of the world. Totally casting aside all care with regard to the immense expense of such an enterprise, she found from the first moment in the manner in which it had been prepared, a motive for distinguishing it from what is termed *une folie de jeune homme.* His sorrow on leaving his wife and those who were dear to him convinced her that she need not fear for the happiness of my life, save in proportion to her fears for his. It was she who gave me the cruel news of his departure, and, with the generous tenderness which was peculiar to her, she tried to comfort me by finding the means of serving M. de Lafayette."

Familiar as are the affairs of Lafayette, little need be said. In the ship chartered and fitted at his own expense—and a great expense it was, far greater than he was justified in devoting to the cause—he crossed the ocean, eluding the British ships sent out to intercept him, and arriving in America, shortly joined the army of Washington.

The fearful anxiety of the young wife can hardly be painted. Scarcely eighteen, passionately in love with her husband, unable, from the delicacy of her health, to amuse herself as she otherwise might have done, she bravely tried to conceal her grief from those who surrounded her, lest they should blame the absent husband for causing it. But it cannot be denied she moped secretly, and her pillow could have told a nightly tale

of tears. Her early letters to her husband were lost, and their fate cannot be guessed; they never reached the young adventurer, whose epistles to his beloved tell the history of his doings in brief without much allusion to American affairs. It must have been awful, sickening, to wait, as they did then, for the slow sailing craft with its eagerly anticipated tidings—even the reports of disaster were better than that blank, dreary, soul-chilling silence. News travelled at that time more slowly than we can comprehend. Days, weeks, passed in the keenest anxiety. The waiting wife did not know if her husband had arrived at his destination, had been captured by the English, if he even lived. Then the first letter, cruelly slow in reaching her, came at last:

On Board the *Victory*, May 30, 1777.

"I am writing to you from a great distance, my dearest love, and, in addition to this painful circumstance, I feel also the still more dreadful uncertainty of the time in which I may receive any news of you. I hope, however, soon to have a letter from you; and amongst the various reasons which render me so desirous of a speedy arrival, this is the one which excites in me the greatest degree of impatience. How many fears and anxieties enhance the keen anguish I feel at being separated from all that I love most fondly in the world! How have you borne my second departure? Have you loved me less? Have you pardoned me? Have you reflected that at all events I must equally have been parted from you, wandering about in Italy, dragging on a lugubrious life, surrounded by persons most opposed to my projects and to my manner of thinking? All these reflections did not prevent me experiencing the most bitter grief when the moment arrived for quitting my native shore. Your sorrow and that of my friends, Adrienne, all rushed upon my thoughts, and my heart was torn by a thousand painful feelings. I could not at that instant find any excuse for my own con-

duct. If you could know all that I have suffered and the melancholy days that I have passed while thus flying from all that I love best in the world! Must I join to this affliction the grief of hearing that you do not pardon me? I should in truth, my love, be too unhappy. But I am not speaking to you of myself and of my health, and I well know that these details will deeply interest you.

"Since writing my last letter, I have been confined to the most dreary of all regions; the sea is so melancholy that it and I mutually, I believe, sadden each other. I ought to have landed by this time, but the winds have been most provokingly contrary. I shall not arrive at Charlestown for eight or ten days. I shall be a great pleasure to me to land, as I am expecting to do, in that city. When I am once more on shore I shall hope each day to receive news from France. I shall learn so many interesting things, both concerning the new country I am seeking, and, above all, that home I have quitted with so much regret! Provided I only learn that you are in good health, that you still love me, and that a certain number of my friends entertain the same feelings towards me, I can become a perfect philosopher with respect to all the rest, whatever it may be or whatever land it may concern. But if my heart be attacked in its most vulnerable part, if you were to love me less, I should feel, in truth, too miserable. But I need not fear this, need I, my dearest love? I was very ill during the first part of my voyage, and I might have enjoyed the pleasure of an ill-natured person, that of knowing I had many fellow-sufferers. I treated myself according to my own judgment, and recovered sooner than the other passengers; I am now nearly the same as if I were on shore. I am certain that on my arrival I shall be in a perfect state of health, and continue so for a long time. Do not fancy that I shall incur any real dangers by the occupations I am undertaking. The post of general officer

has always been considered like a commission for immortality. The service will be very different from the one I must have performed if I had been, for example, a Colonel in the French army. My attendance will only be required in the council. Ask the opinions of all general officers—and these are very numerous, because, having once attained that height, they are no longer exposed to any hazards, and do not therefore yield their place. to inferior officers, as is the case in other situations. To prove that I do not wish to deceive you, I will acknowledge that we are at this moment exposed to some danger from the risk of being attacked by English vessels, and that my ship is not of sufficient force for defence. But when I have once landed, I shall be in perfect safety. You see that I tell you everything, my dearest love; confide therefore in me, and do not, I conjure you, give way to idle fears. I will not write you a journal of my voyage; days succeed each other, and what is worse, resemble each other. Always sky, always water, and the next day a repetition of the same thing. In truth, those who write volumes upon a sea voyage must be incessant babblers; for my part, I have had contrary winds, as well as other people; I have encountered storms, I have seen vessels, and they were far more interesting for me than for any other person; well, I have not observed one single event worth the trouble of relating, or that has not been described by many other persons.

" Let me speak of more important things; of yourself, of dear Henriette, and of her brother or sister. Henriette is so delightful that she has made me in love with little girls. To whichever sex our new infant may belong, I shall receive it with unbounded joy. Lose not a moment in hastening my happiness by apprising me of its birth.

. . . . .

" We have seen to-day several kinds of birds, which announce that we are not very far from shore. The

hope of arriving is very sweet, for a ship life is a most wearisome one. My health, fortunately, allows me to occupy myself a little; I divide my time between military books and English books. I have made some progress in this language, which will become very necessary to me. Adieu. Night obliged me to discontinue my letter, as I have forbidden, some days since, any candles being used in my vessels; see how prudent I have become! Once more, adieu; if my fingers be at all guided by my heart, it is not necessary to see clearly to tell you that I love you, and that I shall love you all my life."

15th June—AT MAJOR HUGER'S.

"I have arrived, my dearest love, in perfect health, at the house of an American officer; and, by the most fortunate chance in the world, a French vessel is on the point of sailing; conceive how happy I am. I am going this evening to Charlestown, from whence I will write you. There is no important news. The campaign is opened, but there is no fighting, or at least, very little. The manners in this part of the world are simple, polite, and worthy in every respect of the country in which the noble name of liberty is constantly repeated. I intended writing to Mme. d'Ayen, but I find it is impossible. Adieu, my love. From Charlestown I shall repair by land to Philadelphia, to rejoin the army. Is it not true that you will always love me?"

Is there not a certain ingenuousness and simplicity in this letter of the boy of nineteen which, even after this lapse of time, appeals to the reader? Homesick he must have been, regretting at times that he had followed his desire for glory to the other side of the world. No doubt he had pictured his part in the struggle for liberty as one in which there was excitement, constant, brilliant action, based on his familiarity with the manœuvres of the French army; dashing on at the

head of his troops to glory. How different the slow, dragging struggle, the undisciplined, half-dressed soldiers, the weary waiting! But he was true to the cause he had undertaken to uphold, and plenty of letters went to cheer the miserably anxious wife. In the next in order from Charlestown, he says:

CHARLESTOWN, June 19, 1777.

"I landed after having sailed for several days along a coast swarming with hostile vessels. On my arrival here every one told me that my ship must undoubtedly be taken, because two English frigates had blockaded the harbour. I even sent, both by land and sea, orders to the Captain to put the men on shore and burn the vessel if he had still the power of doing so. . . . Well, by a most extraordinary piece of good fortune, a sudden gale of wind having blown away the frigates for a short time, the vessel arrived at noonday without having encountered friend or foe. At Charlestown I have met with General Howe, a general officer, now engaged in service. The governor of the state is expected this evening from the country. All the persons with whom I wished to be acquainted have shown me the greatest attention and politeness (not European politeness merely); I can only feel gratitude for the reception I have met with, although I have not yet thought it proper to enter into any details respecting my future prospects and arrangements. I wish to see the Congress first. I hope to set out in two days for Philadelphia, which is a land journey of more than two hundred and fifty leagues. We shall divide into small parties. I have already purchased horses and light carriages for this purpose. There are some French and American vessels at present here which are to sail out of the harbour in company to-morrow morning, taking advantage of a moment when the frigates are out of sight; they are numerous and armed, and have promised me to defend themselves stoutly against

the small privateers they will undoubtedly meet with. I shall distribute my letters among the different ships, in case any accident should happen to either one of them.

"I shall now speak to you, my love, about the country and its inhabitants, who are as agreeable as my enthusiasm had led me to imagine. Simplicity of manner, kindness of heart, love of country and of liberty, and a delightful state of equality are met with universally. The richest and the poorest man are completely on a level; and although there are some immense fortunes in this country, I may challenge any one to point out the slightest difference in their respective manner towards each other. I first saw and judged of country life at Major Huger's house; and I am at present in the city, where everything somewhat resembles the English customs, except that you find more simplicity here than you would do in England. Charlestown is one of the best built, handsomest, and most agreeable cities that I have ever seen. The American women are very pretty, and have great simplicity of character, and the extreme neatness of their appearance is truly delightful; cleanliness is everywhere even more studiously attended to here than in England. What gives me most pleasure is to see how completely the citizens are all brethren of one family. In America there are none poor, and none even that can be called peasants. Each citizen has some property, and all citizens have the same rights as the richest individual, or the landed proprietor in the country. The inns are very different from those of Europe; the hosts and hostesses sit at the table with you, and do the honours of a comfortable meal; and when you depart you pay your bill without being obliged to tax it. If you should dislike going to inns, you may always find country houses in which you will be received as a good American, and with the same attention that you might expect in a friend's house in Europe.

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MADAME LA COMTESSE D'AYEN
GREAT-GRANDMOTHER OF MME. DE LAFAYETTE

From a rare print in the Bibleotheque Nationale, Paris

"I often ask you if you still love, but I put that question still more often to myself and my heart ever answers, yes; I trust that heart does not deceive me. I am inexpressibly anxious to hear from you; I hope to find some letters at Philadelphia. My only fear is that the privateer which was to bring them to me should have been captured on her way. Although I can easily imagine that I have excited the especial displeasure of the English by taking the liberty of coming hither in spite of them, and landing before their very face, yet I must confess that we shall be even more than on a par if they succeed in catching that vessel, the object of my fondest hopes, by which I am expecting to receive your letters. I entreat you to send me both long and frequent letters. You are not sufficiently conscious of the joy with which I shall receive them. Embrace most tenderly my Henriette; may I add, embrace our children? The father of those poor children is a wanderer, but he is, nevertheless, a good, honest man—a good father, warmly attached to his family, and a good husband also, for he loves his wife most tenderly. . . . Adieu, then, my dearest love; I must leave off for want of time and paper, and if I do not repeat ten thousand times that I love you, it is not for want of affection, but from my having the vanity to hope that I have already convinced you of it. The night is far advanced, the heat intense, and I am devoured by gnats; but the best countries, as you perceive, have their inconveniences. Adieu, my love, adieu."

More and more homesick grows the tone of the letters. All the carefully penned epistles of his "dearest love" went—who can tell where? They did not reach their destination. Of the death of poor little Henriette, when twenty-two months old, the young father remained in ignorance, also that a second child had come to take the place of the first-born. At times pas-

sages of his letters are almost pathetic. From Petersburg, Va., on July 17, 1777, he writes:

"I have received no news of you, and my impatience to arrive at Philadelphia to hear from you cannot be compared to any other earthly feeling. Conceive the state of my mind, after having passed such an immense length of time without having received a line from my friend! I hope all this will soon end, for I cannot live in such a state of uncertainty. I have undertaken a task which is, in truth, beyond my power, for my heart was not formed for so much suffering.

"You must have learnt the particulars of the commencement of my journey; you know that I set out in a brilliant manner in a carriage, and I must now tell you that we are all on horseback—having broken the carriage, according to my usual praiseworthy custom—and I hope soon to write you that we have arrived on foot. The journey is somewhat fatiguing, but although several of my comrades have suffered a good deal, I have scarcely myself been conscious of fatigue. The captain who takes charge of this letter will, perhaps, pay you a visit. I beg you in that case to receive him with great kindness.

"I scarcely dare think of the time of your confinement, and yet I think of it every moment of the day. I cannot dwell upon it without the most dreadful anxiety. I am, indeed, unfortunate at being so distant from you; even if you did not love me, you ought to pity me; but you do love me, and we shall mutually render each other happy. This little note will be short in comparison to the volumes I have already sent you, but you shall receive another letter in a few days from me.

"The farther I advance to the north the better pleased am I with the country and its inhabitants. There is no attention or kindness that I do not receive, although many scarcely know who I am. But I will

write all this to you in more detail from Philadelphia. I have only time to entreat you, my dearest love, not to forget an unhappy man, who pays most dearly for the error he committed in parting from you, and who never felt before how tenderly he loved you . . . ."

A few days later he says: "I am each day more miserable from having quitted you, my dearest love, and I hope to receive news of you at Philadelphia, and this hope adds much to the impatience I feel to arrive at that city. Adieu, my life; I am in such haste that I know not what I write, but I do know that I love you more tenderly than ever; that the pain of this separation was necessary to convince me how very dear you are to me, and that I would give at this moment half my existence for the pleasure of embracing you again, and telling you with my own lips how well I love you. . . . O! if you knew how I sigh to see you, how I suffer at being separated from you, and all that my heart has been called upon to endure, you would think me somewhat worthy of your love."

. . . . .

Poor unhappy young couple! Adrienne, torn with anxiety, in the most delicate and precarious condition of health, mourning for her lost child; her absent husband, who now, of all times, should have been at her side; and, to add to all, came the news of her husband's having been severely wounded at the battle of Brandywine. So fearful were those who loved her for her health, that they concealed this news from her, and the first she heard of it was in a letter of her husband, who wrote:

PHILADELPHIA, September 12, 1777.

"I write you a line, my dearest love, by some French officers, my friends who embarked with me, but not having received any appointment in the American army, are now returning to France. I must begin by

telling you that I am perfectly well, because I must end by telling you that we fought seriously last night, and that we were not the strongest on the field of battle. Our Americans, after having stood their ground for some time, ended at length by being routed; whilst endeavouring to rally them, the English honoured me with a musket ball, which slightly wounded me in the leg, but it is a trifle, my dearest love; the ball touched neither bone nor nerve, and I have escaped with the obligation of lying on my back for some time, which puts me much out of humour. I hope that you will feel no anxiety; this event ought, on the contrary, rather to reassure you, since I am incapacitated from appearing on the field for some time; I have resolved to take great care of myself, be convinced of this, my love.

. . . . . .

"You must have received many letters from me, unless the English be equally ill disposed towards my epistles as towards my legs. I have not yet received one letter, and I am most impatient to hear from you. Adieu, I am forbidden to write longer. For several days I have not had time to sleep. Our retreat and my journey hither took up the whole of last night; I am perfectly well taken care of in this place. Tell all my friends that I am in good health. . . . The officers will soon set out, they will see you; what pleasure! Good night, my dearest life! I love you better than ever."

In addition to the many sorrows experienced by Mme. de Lafayette, she suffered keenly, on the arrival of each letter from the unhappy wanderer, from the knowledge that all her letters, filled with the love and affection which she felt for her husband, had failed to reach their destination. She feared that he should think her neglectful, or wanting in tenderness. That he might think she amused herself in the time which she should have devoted to him. She could not explain.

Loving him as she did with every fibre of her being, the thought was agony to her. To a nature so noble and just, the idea of being misunderstood, perchance blamed, by the one she loved most on earth, was insufferable. Her one consolation was in receiving the letters so often written, so tenderly expressed, by the ardent patriot. That telling of his wound caused her terrible anxiety. She was in a fever till the arrival of the next letter, written two weeks later, somewhat relieved her mind. The wounded man wrote cheerfully.

"My first occupation was to write to you the day after that affair. I told you that it was a mere trifle, and I was right; all I fear is that you should not have received my letter. As General Howe is giving, in the meantime, rather pompous details of his American exploits to the King, his master, if he should write word that I am wounded, he may also write word that I am killed, which would not cost him anything; but I hope that my friends, and you especially, will not give faith to the reports of those persons who last year dared to publish that General Washington and all the general officers of his army, being in a boat together, had been upset and every individual drowned. But let us speak about the wound. It is only a flesh wound, and had neither touched bone nor nerve. The surgeons are astonished at the rapidity with which it heals; they are in an ecstasy of joy each time they dress it, and pretend it is the finest thing in the world; on my part, I think it is most disagreeable, painful, and wearisome; but tastes differ. If a man, however, wished to be wounded for his amusement only, he should come and examine how I have been struck that he might be struck precisely in the same manner. This, my dearest love, is what I pompously style my wound, to give myself airs and render myself interesting.

"I must give you your lesson as the wife of an American general officer. They will say to you: 'They

have been beaten.' You must answer: 'That is true; but when two armies of *equal numbers* meet in the field, old soldiers have naturally the advantage over new ones; they have had, besides, the pleasure of killing a great many of the enemy, many more than they have lost.' They will afterwards add: 'All that is very well; but Philadelphia is taken, the Capital of America, the rampart of Liberty!' You must politely answer: 'You are all great fools! Philadelphia is a poor forlorn town, exposed on every side, whose harbour was already closed; though the residence of Congress lent it, I know not why, some degree of celebrity. This is the famous city which, it may be added, we will soon make them yield back to us!' If they continue to persecute you with questions, you may send them about their business in terms which the Vicomte de Noailles will teach you, for I cannot lose time by talking to you of politics.

"I have delayed writing your letter till the last, in the hope of receiving one from you. . . . Recollect, my dearest love, that I have only once heard of you, from Count Pulaski. I am much provoked and am very miserable. Imagine how dreadful it is to be far from all I love, in this state of suspense and almost despair; it is impossible to support it, and I feel, at the same time, that I do not deserve to be pitied. Why was I so obstinately bent on coming hither? I have been well punished for my error; my affections are too strongly rooted for me to be able to perform such deeds. I hope you pity me. If you knew all I suffer, especially at this moment, when everything concerning you is so deeply interesting! I cannot, without shuddering, think of this. I am told that a parcel has arrived from France; I have dispatched expresses on every road and in every corner; I have sent an officer to Congress; I am expecting him every day, and you may conceive with what feelings of intense anxiety. My surgeon is also very anxious for his arrival, for this suspense keeps my blood in a state of effervescence,

and he would fain require that it should flow calmly. O, my dearest life, if I receive good news from you and all I love, if those delightful letters arrive to-day, how happy I shall be! but with what agitation, also, I shall open them!" . . .

Despite the fact that he received no news of any kind from his wife, relations, or friends, the young soldier undauntedly, persistently, continued to write on every opportunity. "Hope springs eternal," and by the very persistence of his efforts he resolved to force those longed-for missives from an unkind fate. No explanation is offered for the non-arrival of the letters from his wife. The only supposition being that they were intercepted by the English privateers and other ships, constantly hovering around at this time. Why the ships, bearing news from the American side of the water were more fortunate, is one of those things impossible to explain. In this instance, almost the only one in her eventful life, was the mind of Mme. de Lafayette spared more anxiety than was naturally incident to the situation of her husband, and the grief caused by the long separation. Though the happenings of the minute were of world-wide interest, the mind of Lafayette was not too much occupied to write in a strain ten million times more satisfactory to his "dearest love" than the most eloquent epic based on the battles of the Revolution could have been. He was of a loving and affectionate nature, and the little comfort he had in his exile consisted in reiterating that fact to one so dear to him.

Again he writes:

The Camp near Whitmarsh, Oct. 29, 1777.

"I send you an open letter, my dearest love, in the person of M. de Valfort, my friend, whom I entreat you to receive as such. He will tell you at length everything concerning me, but I must tell you myself

how well I love you. . . . Is it not dreadful, my love, to reflect that it is by the public, by English papers, by our enemy's gazettes, that I should receive intelligence concerning you? In an unimportant article relating to my arrival here, they ended by speaking of yourself, your approaching confinement. . . .

"A thousand tender regards to your mother; my kind regards to your sisters. Do not forget my compliments to the Maréchal de Noailles, and to your paternal and maternal relations. I have received four foolish lines from the Maréchal de Mouchy, who does not say one word of you; I swore at him in every language. Adieu, my love, adieu; ask questions of my good excellent friend, M. de Valfort, for my paper is coming to a close. It is dreadful to be reduced to hold no communication but by letter with a person whom one loves as I love you, and as I ever shall love you until I draw my latest breath.

"I have not missed a single opportunity, not even the most indirect one, without writing to you. Do the same also on your side, my dearest life, if you love me; but I should indeed be unfeeling and ungrateful if I were to doubt you."

"Fortune favours the brave," we are told, and at last he received the longed-for letters, which he mentions in a rather amusing one which follows, written nearly two weeks later, while at the same camp:

Camp at Whitmarsh, November 6, 1777.

"You will perhaps receive this letter, my dearest love, at the expiration of five or six years, for I am writing to you by an accidental opportunity, in which I do not place great trust. See what a circuit my letter must make. An officer in the army will carry it to Fort Pitt, three hundred miles in the interior of the continent; it will then embark on the great Ohio river, and traverse regions inhabited only by savages; having reached New

Orleans, a small vessel will transport it to the Spanish Islands; a ship of that nation will carry it with her on her return to Europe. But it will even then be very distant from you; and it is only after having been soiled by the dirty hands of all the Spanish postmasters that it will be allowed to pass the Pyrenees. It may very possibly be unsealed and resealed five or six times before it be finally placed in your hands; but it will prove to you that I neglect no opportunity, not even the most indirect one, of sending you news of myself, and repeating how well I love you. It is, however, for my own satisfaction only that I delight to tell you so at present. I hope that I shall have the pleasure of throwing this letter in the fire when it arrives, for be it understood I shall be there also, and my presence will render this piece of paper very insignificant. The idea is most soothing to my heart, and I indulge it with rapture. How enchanting to think of the moments when we shall be together! but how painful to recollect that my joy is only caused by an illusion, and that I am separated from the reality of my happiness by two thousand leagues, an immense ocean, and villainous English vessels. Those wretched vessels make me very unhappy. One letter, only one, have I yet received from you, my love; the others have been lost or taken, and are probably at the bottom of the sea. I must consider our enemy the cause of this dreadful loss, for I am certain you do not neglect to write to me from every port, and by all the despatches sent by Dr. Franklin and Mr. Deane. And yet some ships arrived. I have sent couriers to every corner of the Continent, but all my hopes have been frustrated. Perhaps you have not been properly informed. I entreat you, my love, to inquire carefully in what manner you may best send your letters. It is so dreadful to me to be deprived of them, and I am so unhappy at being separated from all I love! I am guilty, it is true, of having caused my own calamity, but you would pity me if you knew all that my heart endured. . . . A lit-

tle gentleman in a blue coat, with lemon-coloured facings and a white waistcoat, a German, coming hither to solicit an employment (which he will not obtain), and speaking wretched French, told me that he quitted Europe in the month of August; he talked to me of politics and of the ministry; he will upset all Europe generally, and every court individually; but he knew not a word of what was most interesting to my heart. I examined him in every way; I mentioned fifty names to him; his answer was always, '*Me not know them noblemen*!'" . . .

From the camp at Valley Forge, surrounded by snow and ice, he again writes to his wife. This time there is once more a hint of that love of glory, that patriotic fervour, which had caused him to sacrifice so much to his ideals. He overlooks the poor shelter, mean circumstances, and privations inseparable from such a situation, for which he had relinquished wife, home, friends, and the comforts of luxurious France. The patriotic fires in his heart made him oblivious that it was icy cold—that the wind howled, the snow drifted through the ill-built shelters of the camp. Buoyed by faith in his cause, by the hope that soon, with the springtime, he would be reunited with his family, the short, dreary, winter days passed.

"The bearer of this letter will describe the pleasant residence which I chose in preference to the happiness of being with you, with my friends, in the midst of all possible enjoyments," he writes later. "In truth, my love, do you not believe that powerful reasons are requisite to induce a person to make such a sacrifice? Everything combined to urge me to depart; honour alone told me to remain, and when you learn in detail the circumstances in which I am placed, you will not only forgive me, but you will excuse, and I may almost venture to say, applaud me. What a pleasure I shall take

in explaining to you myself all the reasons of my conduct, and in asking, while embracing you, a pardon, which I am very certain I shall then obtain! But do not condemn me before hearing my defense. In addition to the reasons I have given you, there is one other reason which I would not relate to every one, because it might appear like affecting airs of ridiculous importance. My presence is more necessary to the American cause than you can possibly conceive; many foreigners who have been refused employment, or whose ambitious views have been frustrated, have raised up some powerful cabals; they have endeavoured by every sort of artifice to make me discontented with this revolution and with him who is its chief; they have spread as widely as they could the report that I was quitting the continent. The English have proclaimed also, loudly, the same intention on my side. I cannot in conscience appear to justify the malice of these people. If I were to depart many Frenchmen who are useful here would follow my example. General Washington would feel very unhappy if I were to speak of quitting him; his confidence in me is greater than I dare acknowledge, on account of my youth. In the place he occupies he is likely to be surrounded by flatterers or secret enemies; he finds in me a sincere friend, in whose bosom he may always confide his most secret thoughts, and who will always speak the truth."

. . . . .

At this moment he was as yet unaware of the death of his eldest child, Henriette, who passed from this world in October, of the year 1777, six months after her father left France. In another part of the letter quoted above, he says: "What a pleasure it will give me to embrace my two poor little girls, and make them request their mother to forgive me! You do not believe me so hard-hearted, and at the same time so ridiculous, as to suppose that the sex of our new infant can

have diminished in any degree my joy at its birth. . . . However, if it be on account of the name that we are to regret not having a son, I declare that I have formed the project of living long enough to bear it myself, before I yield it to any other person. I am indebted to the Maréchale de Noailles for the joyful news . . . say a thousand respectful things from me to her" (Mme. de Fronsac) "as well as to the Comtesse Auguste" (de la Marck). "If those ladies do not enter into the reasons which induce me to remain here, they must indeed think me an absurd being, more especially as they have opportunities of seeing clearly what a charming wife I am separated from; but even that may prove to them what powerful motives must guide my conduct. Several general officers have brought their wives to the camp. I envy them—not their wives—but the happiness they enjoy in being able to see them. General Washington has also resolved to send for his wife. As to the English, they have received a reinforcement of three hundred young ladies from New York; and we have captured a vessel filled with chaste officers' wives, who had come to rejoin their husbands; they were in great fear of being kept for the American army. . . .

"Do you not think that at my return we shall be old enough to establish ourselves in our own house, live there happily together, receive our friends, institute a delightful state of freedom, and read foreign newspapers, without feeling any curiosity to judge for ourselves of what may pass in foreign countries? I enjoy thus building in France castles of felicity and pleasure; you always share them with me, my dearest love, and when we are once more united nothing shall again separate us, or prevent our experiencing together and through each other the joy of mutual affection and the sweetest and most tranquil happiness. Adieu, my love, I only wish this project could be executed on the present day. . . ."

Of that long and dreary winter at Valley Forge the world knows too much to make details interesting. Even the bravest hearts sometimes became doubtful of the ending of the struggle. It is hard to be patriotic and hopeful when the pangs of hunger vie with the love of country, and the winter frosts nip, with great impartiality, the exposed portions of the patriotic anatomy! But they struggled doggedly on. In the ardent heart of the young Frenchman there was a terrible all-consuming desire to fly to the home, the wife who languished in his absence. Poor Adrienne! At times the separation was more than she could endure; worse from the fact that, fearing to add to the blame which she knew her family secretly heaped on her husband, she stifled those feelings which it would have been such a relief to have expressed, to have sobbed out on a comforting shoulder. She was at this time only eighteen, and, but for her peculiar disposition, might have passed the time gaily in the society of those who were her friends, and at the court, then famous for its extravagances and much exaggerated doings. She devoted herself to the new child, whose presence brought comfort to the heart still mourning the loss of little Henriette. She continued to write to her husband at each and every opportunity which presented, and some of these letters seem to have been more fortunate in reaching their destination, though some miscarried. As time wore on and Lafayette became more interested and reconciled to the new life and surroundings, there creeps into his letters a different tone. There is more talk of the affairs in which he was playing a daily part; less homesickness and repinings. Time softens the edges of all things, even harrowing separations, and it is a matter of conjecture if, after the first few months, the separation was not much more keenly felt by Adrienne de Lafayette than by her husband. She was the one to remain behind, in the midst of familiar daily surroundings; all hallowed and associated with the sweet-

est memories a woman can have—those of her courtship and early married life. Her husband's name was constantly on the lips of her mother and sisters; every instant she was reminded of him, while he was among strangers with whom he had no previous acquaintance or connection. No lips in that far-off country called her name; no one thought of her, save the very few to whom the exiled marquis confided the sorrows and anxieties which beset his soul, finding much comfort in the calm, strong friendship of General Washington, for whom, in truth, he had sacrificed much, when he might have returned to France. Lafayette wrote constantly to those at home during that winter, but nothing of great importance. As usual, he complains of receiving no letters.

VALLEY FORGE CAMP, IN PENNSYLVANIA,
April 14, 1778.

"If thirty opportunities were to present themselves at once, my dearest love, you may rest assured that I would write thirty letters, and that, if you do not receive any news from me, I have nothing, at least, to reproach myself with. . . . Respecting your own (letters), my love, I prefer accusing fate, the waves and Lord Howe, and the devil, to suspecting you of negligence. I am convinced that you will not allow a single opportunity to escape of writing to me; but I should feel, if possible, still more so if I could only hope that you knew the degree of happiness your letters give me. I love you more ardently than ever, and repeated assurances of your affection are absolutely necessary to my repose, and to that species of felicity which I can enjoy whilst separated from all I love most fondly—if, however, the word *felicity* can be applied to my melancholy, exiled state. Endeavour to afford me some consolation, and neglect no opportunity of writing to me. Millions of ages have elapsed since I have received a line from any one. This complete ignorance of the

situation of all those who are most dear to me is, indeed, a dreadful calamity. . . .

" Present my respects to the Maréchal de Noailles, and tell him that I have sent him some trees from Albany, but I will send him others also at various times, that I may feel certain of his receiving a few of them."

Shortly after this he sends a letter by " an English officer," his friend General Fitzpatrick, with whom he had formed a strong friendship while in England. This was the same generous and broad-minded man who made that famous motion in the House of Commons on December 1, 1796, to aid those unfortunate prisoners confined in the dungeons of Olmütz.

After the winter in Valley Forge the affairs of the patriots moved apace. The prospects were so much brighter that, unannounced and unexpected, one day young Lafayette appeared before his wife. Once landed in France he had flown so fast that he arrived before the news of his return had reached Paris. It was nearly two years since the boy had embarked on that, apparently, wild-goose chase; and it was a wiser, if not a sadder man who returned to the welcoming hearth. This took place in the spring, February, 1789, and many were the changes which the young marquis, fresh from a country where the life was so different, noticed in the affairs of his native land. He rejoiced at the evidences of republicanism, the mutterings of discontent which growled like the premonition of distant thunder. Alas! when he awoke to the fact that his people were not of the same temperament as those for whom he had been fighting, that they were not yet prepared for a new condition of things, it was too late. The " deluge " had arrived.

CHAPTER VIII

THE joy of Mme. de Lafayette at once again beholding her husband alive and well was so great that, in a moment, were the cares, the sorrows, and anxieties of the past two years almost forgotten. In his sympathetic ear she poured the pent-up confidences of hope, of loneliness, and renewed those little discussions of daily life which had been so long interrupted. Then, and not before, did her mother tell her of the rumour which had been at one time current, of the death of M. de Lafayette.

" I need not say what were my mother's feelings on hearing such intelligence," Mme. de Lafayette wrote later. " She succeeded in keeping from me the report of his death which was spread about at that time, and to prevent false news from reaching my ear she first took me to her father's place in Bourgogne, and then sent my sister and me on a visit to the Comtesse Auguste de la Marck at Raismes.

" During the winter of 1778, my mother turned all her efforts to obtaining intelligence from America. We heard occasionally from M. de Lafayette. The Alliance between France and the United States caused my mother great satisfaction; I had never seen her take such an interest in any political event. In the spring, my sister having to go to Bordeaux on a visit to her husband's relations, my mother wished me to accompany her, hoping the change of scene might prove a diversion for me. She took charge of Anastasie, whom I left behind, and this was the first time she was ever separated from her daughters."

Among the rejoicings indulged in by the family, on the return of the prodigal, there was at all times that undercurrent of sorrow which made the gaiety a sort of froth, under which lay the bitter dregs, sooner or later to be reached. This was caused by the intention of Lafayette to return to America, where he considered his services of moment to the cause. Not satisfied with his efforts of the past years, after the first few days with his family, he continued to rush from place to place, attending to the affairs of his American friends. His wife says of him:

"Owing to the war, which still lasted, several expeditions were sent out that same year. M. de Noailles (her brother-in-law) was ordered to the West Indies with his regiment. His wife was in despair at this separation; my mother shared in her daughter's feelings with her usual tenderness, and helped her support her trials with the aid of religious consolations. A projected descent on England, in which my father and M. de Lafayette were to take part, a severe and rather long illness I had about this time, were for my mother fresh subjects of anxiety.

"In the course of the following winter, 1779, M. du Roure was mentioned to my parents for their third daughter. This proposal entered into my mother's views. M. du Roure's person was pleasing, he had been brought up with every possible care by a devoted mother, whom he had never left, and whom he loved and venerated." Unfortunately, this marriage was not a happy one. Whether the young man had been too carefully brought up, or his wife—possibly in disposition somewhat like her mother—possessed those idiosyncrasies which had not made the union of the Duc and Duchesse d'Ayen in every respect congenial, is a matter of conjecture. Adrienne writes, not so very long after the marriage:

"M. du Roure's complete indifference for his wife, and my sister's weak state of health were causes of

great disappointment to my mother. She did her best to bring about her daughter's happiness, exhorting her to please her husband, and exerting herself to make the house agreeable to M. du Roure; but all was useless." The conclusion of this unhappy marriage was not long in coming. Soon after the surrender of Cornwallis had been effected, and the family again rejoiced at the return of Lafayette—" our brother-in-law du Roure was taken ill with the smallpox, and died after a few days' suffering. Although his extreme coldness for his wife was a cause of grief to us all, it was impossible not to be attached to a young man who possessed so many amiable qualities, and not to sympathise with a mother who had lost so tender and affectionate a son. My poor little sister's grief was true and sincere as herself. Her health having been much shaken by this sudden blow, my father and mother brought her home to live under their roof." This was the only unhappy marriage among the daughters or the intimate relatives of Mme. d'Ayen—a remarkable fact in so large a family.

On December 23, 1779, the long-looked-for heir was born; this was the one thing necessary to complete the happiness of all the family. The boy was christened George Washington Lafayette, in compliment to that celebrated man, and, ill though she was, the event compensated for all the sufferings of the past two years. The grief at parting from her husband, who shortly after this returned to America, almost prostrated her. In addition to the many sorrows of the last separation, and his long absence, she had learned to love him to distraction, and the pleasure and happiness afforded her in his companionship during the previous year, and the uncertainty of ever seeing him again, caused her the most exquisite anguish. She was at this moment but twenty, and the accounts of the Virginia campaign, through the medium of the English newspapers, represented the cause of the patriots as a lost and desperate one. With the self-sacrificing sweet-

ness of her nature, she hid her anxieties from her mother, lest her grief should add to the sorrows of the duchesse, whose heart was wrapped in the fate of her son-in-law. In addition to M. de Lafayette being in America, M. de Noailles, the husband of Louise, had lately, in company with Rochambeau, set sail for those shores, so it is easy to picture the absorbing interest with which news from the seat of war was awaited. An added sorrow was the death of Adrien, the son of Louise de Noailles, one of the dearly loved grandchildren. The death of her stepmother, Mme. de Fresnes, came as keen bereavement to gentle Mme. d'Ayen, and, in company with Louise, who perhaps of all her daughters was the one most resembling her, they found comfort in their devotions and prayers for those who had left this world. But they put grief for the dead aside, for George Lafayette was suddenly stricken with a dangerous illness, and it was only after weary and sleepless nights spent in earnest prayer that the crisis was passed, the child pronounced out of danger. Adrienne confesses, "that I blushed at feeling how much my faith was inferior to hers." Poor soul! she had little to reproach herself with in anything. Of her feelings at this moment she says:

"My child recovered, and cruel anxieties on his father's account succeeded to those I had suffered on his. During the campaign of Virginia, M. de Lafayette was unable to correspond with us, and the newspapers described the situation as almost desperate. I succeeded in keeping the most alarming circumstances from my mother's knowledge, as she had, in 1777, kept her fears from me. But I could only spare her part of my anxieties." . . .

Suddenly, most unexpectedly, on January 21, 1782, Lafayette arrived in Paris, bringing news of the brilliant conclusion of the campaign. Those who were living tell of the "enthusiasm excited by M. de Lafayette's arrival." It was shared by the queen herself.

The news of the conqueror of Cornwallis arrived in the midst of a grand *fête* which was being celebrated at the Hôtel de Ville, in honour of the dauphin's birth. "Mme. de Lafayette, who was present, received a very remarkable proof of royal favour. The queen herself drove her back in her own carriage to the Hôtel de Noailles, where M. de Lafayette had just arrived."

The affable Marie Antoinette, whose love of simplicity was her bane, cut short the respectfully worded sentences of thanks for the honour which had been conferred on Mme. de Lafayette. She was young, she had suffered too much from the coldness and indifference of her husband, not to appreciate the feelings of the young woman whose gallant lord awaited her. Already the loungers had begun to gather in the rue Saint Honoré, attracted by the unusual spectacle of the queen's carriage, ere the massive gates of the courtyard swung to hiding it from sight. With a last word of congratulation to the wife of the fortunate general, Marie Antoinette drove away. Almost beside herself, stumbling over the ceremonious dress she wore, Adrienne flew up the steps between stiff rows of lackeys, and a moment later was folded tightly in those arms whose circle made her world.

What joy it was to one of her nature to feel at last that her husband was regarded and esteemed by the world as she and those near her had always appreciated him. To see the laurels of victory on his brow, and to know that all her hopes and prayers had been rewarded. Then, and only then, did she realise how fearfully strained and overwrought were her nerves.

"The joy of seeing him again, and the fascination of his presence were intensely felt by my mother," her daughter tells us. "So overpowering were her feelings that for several months she felt ready to faint every time he left the room. She was alarmed at the vehemence of her passion, fearing that she could not always conceal it from my father, and that it might

become annoying to him, and she therefore endeavoured to restrain it for his sake only."

The pleasure which Lafayette, on his side, found in being once more in the society of his "dearest Adrienne," was greatly alloyed by the apprehensions felt by those around her on account of her terrible state of health. For the months following the return of her husband she was in a very grave condition, and after seven months of great suffering, her last child, Marie Antoinette Virginie, named for the queen, and in memory of the Virginia campaign, was born. Though the child was at first delicate, from the circumstances preceding its birth, it throve apace, and from this time the mother seemed to rally, and daily gained strength as she rested in the shade of their beautiful garden, or from her window watched the ever-changing aspect of river and royal palace beyond. Little by little she rallied, and in the exciting events which followed forgot self, becoming reanimated by that strong, ever-present desire to be of aid to her husband in his numberless undertakings. Once more her feminine interest was aroused by the wedding of her sister Rosalie, who was married to M. de Montagu in the choir of Saint Roch, nearly opposite the Hôtel de Noailles, and attended by all the members of the various clans.

Shortly after this event, the Lafayettes, who had lived at the Hôtel de Noailles, according to agreement, since their marriage, bought a fine hôtel in the rue de Bourbon—now rue de Lille—almost at the corner of the rue de Bourgogne. This house, to be later the scene of great hospitality, cost the sum of 200,000 livres, with another 50,000 livres for improvements, and 50,000 more for furnishings, now, alas! gone the way of so many fine old places, swept by the restless march of alteration into the Boulevard Saint-Germain. From its windows could be seen the treetops of her childhood's home, and each day, no matter what or how important the engagements, the devoted Adri-

enne went to see her mother, from whom for the first time since her birth she was separated. The young people found the pleasures of their own fireside fully equal to those fond anticipations expressed by the marquis in his letters during the first exile in America. This change of dwelling was made soon after his final return.

In the spring of 1783 the death of Lafayette's aunt, Marguerite Madelaine, brought the young couple to Auvergne; the memories of this aunt, so closely interwoven with Lafayette's boyhood, added a sentimental desire to the necessity of making the journey. It was the first time his wife had seen the home of his people; and here she met another aunt, Mme. la Comtesse de Chavinac, who later in her life was to be so devoted to her. Added to this party were Mme. du Roure and Mme. d'Ayen, though the latter had hardly arrived at rugged Chavinac, much less rested from the fatigues of the onerous journey, than she was summoned home by the death of her father, M. d'Agusseau, who had been ailing for some time, finally being gathered to his ancestors at the ripe old age of eighty-two. As soon as the poignancy of grief had exhausted itself, Adrienne persuaded her mother to rejoin them at Chavinac, which she did, while there forming a strong friendship with Mme. de Chavinac, a remarkable woman, who sympathised not with the political views of her nephew —thought the king inviolate from comment, considered the father of Lafayette, who had fallen at Minden, and of whom she treasured a large portrait, in the light of a departed saint, managed the household with praiseworthy energy, and was proud of the fact that she had never left Chavinac in her life! To the young Lafayettes she was a sort of combination fairy godmother and just Nemesis, though it must be owned that the former character prevailed over, and sometimes extinguished, the latter. They became devoted to her, impeding her footsteps with their childish willingness to

help the august lady when she was bent on one of her many errands of mercy to those dependent upon her bounty. She had been a widow many years, having married her cousin, one of the many branches of the family. On the principle of extremes meeting, Rosalie, "who at times was inclined to be headstrong and obstinate," became devotedly attached to Mme. de Chavinac, lamenting much when she was finally obliged to return to Paris with her relatives at the conclusion of the visit.

So they entombed themselves in the cumbersome coaches of the day and generation, and amid good wishes and fond farewells started on the road to Paris. Once there, Adrienne had to face another parting with her husband, who sailed for America to fulfil some engagements made before leaving the last time. Again the ocean separated them.

About this time Rosalie, "the headstrong," was married to the Comte de Grammont; and then, at the earnest wish of her mother, "that attractive young widow," Mme. du Roure, listened to the proposals of M. de Thésan, with whom she was as happy as she had been miserable in her former wedded life. During the absence of his father the education of young George occupied the attention of his mother, to the exclusion of other affairs. She wanted the boy to prove to his father that the paternal judgment had not been at fault when he placed the instruction of the child solely in his mother's hands, dependent on her judgment alone. Though the condition of society was not marked by any true or real piety—indeed, so strongly rooted had the doctrines of the philosophers become that to those watching it seemed that the crash could not be far away—Adrienne, as did her mother before her, strove earnestly, untiringly, that her boy should be a true Christian and make himself worthy of the name he bore. That he should cherish the principles of honour and Christianity before those of worldly gain and am-

bition, was the mission of M. Frestel to instil into that youthful mind, and from future events it was clearly proved that this worthy man practiced to the fullest detail what he preached. Fearing that the constant going and coming of visitors, the excitement and stir of the many duties incident to his father's prominent position might disturb and have a bad effect on one whose mind was just forming, his mother engaged a small lodging in the rue St. Jacques, near by, where he lived for some time with his tutor, and where his mother constantly visited him.

That the much-mooted question of slavery should have occupied the just and benevolent mind of Mme. de Lafayette is not strange. Her husband had long been one of the active members of the society, *les amis du noir*, which, by its prematurely applied doctrines did so much harm to those who had not yet reached the point where they could distinguish the difference between liberty and license. It was the wish of the members of this famous coterie to make the black capable of working his own salvation; but the mental development of the aforesaid black had not, at that moment, attained the degree of intelligence to make this Utopian plan practicable. It was the burning question of the day. Lafayette and Larochefoucauld were at the head of the movement. Lafayette was encouraged by the Minister of Marine, M. de Castries, who directed M. Lescaliers, the Intendant of Cayenne, a " man of skill, probity, and experience," to try upon the king's negroes the scheme for a new system. Lafayette had at first expended 120,000 livres upon the purchase of his plantation La Belle Gabrielle, at Cayenne, on the northeast coast of South America, its management being confided to a kindred thinker and philosopher, M. de Richprey. It was an Arcadian experiment. The details of the venture were the sole care of Mme. de Lafayette. With its management she was familiar, of each expenditure she kept a careful account, and had

carte blanche from her husband, who was too much occupied with the troubled politics in France to have much time left for other matters.

What an opportunity for one of her devout mind and unworldly disposition! She entered the experiment with that intensity which earned for her the name of the "Ardent Adrienne," without, however, having given any time or study to the real disposition and nature of the black races. From her stand-point it was imperative that before all else the negroes on the plantation should be thoroughly taught the elements of religion and morality, thus preparing them for and making them worthy of the liberty which one day should be theirs. It was her hope to achieve their improvement by this measure, afterward to prove triumphantly to the free thinkers of the day that it was through divine intercession that all this had been accomplished. She cultivated the friendship of the priests of the Séminaire du Saint Esprit, worthy men who had a missionary establishment at Cayenne. With the Abbé Farjon, the *curé* in charge, she corresponded continuously. Were the letters in existence, what an interesting tale of hopes, plans, and unknown details their reading would furnish! But, alas! all these dreams were abruptly ended by the Revolution; the plantation and its inhabitants scattered before a devastating storm of fire and terror, with only the mitigating circumstance that the negroes of La Belle Gabrielle did not commit any of those awful atrocities which occurred at adjoining plantations, and particularly in the island of San Domingo. All the property of Lafayette was seized by the revolutionists, and the slaves sold, scattered to the corners of the earth. So ended the well-meant attempt to benefit his fellow-men.

The Civil Constitution of the Clergy, then uppermost in every mind, was a subject of great tribulation to one so faithful and pious as Mme. de Lafayette. Religious and devout she was before all else, but, like

Mme. d'Ayen, utterly without the slightest tinge of bigotry, and it grieved her to see daily, hourly acts perpetrated in the name of religion; acts which by their intolerance served to disgust those reasonable and just minds, and to offer to the ever growing class of scoffers the subjects needed for their grievances. She was broad-minded enough to allow to each and every one a place in heaven, though their belief was not hers. She warmly aided and abetted her husband in his efforts to secure for the Protestants those civil rights which the intrigues of the Maintenon and the Jesuits had taken from them on March 23, 1685, just one hundred and two years before, by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Lafayette passed some time at Nîmes, to better acquaint himself with the merits of the cause he was championing, then made the motion which was triumphantly carried in his favour in the Assembly.

As the Revolution grew apace, religious matters caused her much uneasiness. The vast upheaval, the overthrow of the routine of centuries, can hardly be comprehended. Her house was ever the refuge for the unfortunate *religieuse*. Priests who had refused to take the oath of the constitution, nuns who had been insulted—all homeless and driven before the winds of atheism blowing fiercely over the country at this moment. The love which she felt for her husband made her accept his acts without criticism, and she received gladly and courteously with deep sympathy the prominent clergymen whom Lafayette's championship of the Protestant cause brought to their house. Before everything, Adrienne de Noailles possessed the courage of her convictions, with perhaps some of the inherited stubbornness of the celebrated cardinal, her ancestor. Situated as she was, she considered it was "her duty to testify her attachment to the Catholic cause. She was, therefore, present when the *curé* of St. Sulpice, whose parishioner she was, refused from the pulpit to take the oath." Nor did she allow to pass a single

opportunity to establish cordial relations with any of those who might eventually be of service in re-establishing the former condition of affairs, particularly such things as would be of benefit to her ecclesiastical *protegés*, now destitute and homeless. She was a curious example of everyday common sense and child-like faith in the efficacy of prayer, combined with political sagacity and great domesticity of character. Somewhat complex to be understood, much less appreciated by the average person. She was, indeed, absolutely, wholly, feminine!

CHAPTER IX

THE Revolution, gradually gaining impetus before devastating the country, was assuming proportions no longer to be ignored. After the famous fourteenth of July (1789) and the fall of the Bastille, M. de Lafayette was elected commander-in-chief of the national guards. Though he professed republican principles and theories as to the equality of mankind, Lafayette in no way countenanced or sympathised with the extreme ideas and actions of many of those surrounding him, and some time later resigned his command, disgusted and sickened at the lack of self-control which led his associates to make inhuman beasts of themselves.

Again, Mme. de Lafayette was placed in the situation which destiny seemed to take peculiar delight in choosing for her: a position between love and old association. Though she believed in and upheld her husband's actions heart and soul, she came of a family noted for its devotion to the old *régime*; who had always been friends of their sovereigns, holding positions of the greatest trust and confidence near the royal person. Her father was captain of the *garde du corps*, and it was only the pronounced ideas of her husband which had kept him from the court, as he preferred the comparative liberty of the army. Seeing him at the head of the republicans, often sacrificing his popularity to oppose an unjust or disorderly act, as later he risked much to save his king and queen, she admired and loved him, and approved of all his actions, "though never did she see him leave the house during that period

without thinking that she was bidding him adieu for the last time." Those were days when reason and reflection played no part; the very name of law was forgotten in the land.

At this period of her life, as in all other tribulations, Adrienne's faith enabled her to believe that what was was for the best. It was the will of Heaven. The tenderness of Mme. d'Ayen meant much to her daughter, though the opinions of the former were those of a lifetime, of her friends, of her ancestors; the nobility and justice of her character enabled her to appreciate the motives of her son-in-law, as she had ever loved and understood him from the first, though Lafayette's ideas were not her own. From the prominent public position of her husband Mme. de Lafayette was obliged to keep open house. Lafayette was the idol of the day. To such an extent did the cult of patriotism rise that it influenced the dress of the women! What more can one ask? It was the women who tore the jewels from their fingers and poured forth a precious stream for *le dom patriotique*; who seized the opportunity to display their Diana-like forms beneath sheer, tantalising *chiffons*; who exposed themselves for their country's sake as no Spartan dame, with all her vaunted courage, ere had done. It was an epoch when the old and ugly had no place in the ranks of these excited and lovely Amazons. It was a day when modesty hid her head abashed.

One enthusiast, Mme. Brulart, perhaps outdistanced her patriotic sisters in the novelty she evolved. This lady constantly wore at her breast a "medallion made of a stone of the Bastille, polished. In the middle of the medallion *Liberté* was written in diamonds; above was marked in diamonds the planet that shone on the fourteenth of July, and below was seen the moon of the size she appeared that memorable night. The medallion was set in a branch of laurel, composed of emeralds, and tied at the top with the national col-

ours." It would be amusing to know the size and weight of this novel *bijou*.

Popular enthusiasm reached the limit of its frenzy at that gigantic *fête*, the celebration of the Federation, on July 14, 1790, one year after the demolition of the Bastille, which, by the way, has always been a much exaggerated and romantically overrated piece of warfare. Through the ill-placed economy of M. de Launay, the governor, who had a passion for gold, the place was only defended by half, or less than half, the necessary guards. On the morning of the fourteenth the amount of his troops was but fourscore *invalides* and thirty-two *Suisse*. To this was opposed a city full of fierce, irrepressible, hungry spirits, goaded on by the knowledge that there was in Paris only enough provisions for twenty-four hours, and then starvation for them and their families. The Bastille was erroneously supposed to be well stored with enough food to stand a siege. In reality there were *two sacks of flour and a little rice*! The sole supply of water came from without, and might be cut off at any moment. De Launay certainly lacked that strategical brain which makes the successful general. The details of this assault are too commonly known to need repetition, but the knowledge is less universal that, in this hated prison, which time had surrounded with horror and mystery, at the time of its fall there were only *seven* prisoners! This fact is sufficient to account for the small guard maintained by M. de Launay, whose income was greatly diminished by the ill-filled dungeons over which he presided.

There is also little doubt that the general student pictures a vast concourse of spectres, led by the Man in the Iron Mask, phantoms clanking heavy fetters, victims of the puissant Pompadour, whose favourite *lettres de cachet* kept the gloomy castle well filled in her day. A groaning, lacerated mass, bleeding from the torments practised on them, surging, staggering

forth as the sullen doors creaked open, blinking stupidly at the unaccustomed light. There is no prison so world-widely notorious as the Bastille. Disappointing is it then to romance to show that the mob rushed through every corner and nook, broke into the council chamber, burned and destroyed a great part of the records of that inhuman château, which would have been of great interest to the student of history. They plunged into the dungeons, chill and dark as death, forced wide each door opposing their onrush, and found—seven miserable men! One of these unfortunate creatures, who had been confined for thirty-five years underground, staggered and would have fallen but for the bystanders, so unused were his eyes to the light of day. Tears poured down his cheeks. He begged the mob in faint tones: "*Messieurs, vous m'avez rendu un grand service, rendez-m'en un autre; tuez-moi! Je ne sais où aller!*"

"*Allons, allons!*" the crowd cried as with one voice. "*La nation te nourrira!*" and the poor old gray-beard was promptly hustled away to be cared for by those who had restored his liberty.

Some instruments of torture were discovered by the mob. An iron frame "contrived to contain every joint of a man, and hold him forever immovable." Several machines, equally ingenious, were found, but as no one could even surmise how or for what sort of torture they had been used, it would appear that this polite art had fallen somewhat in abeyance of late. Strange sequence of "ifs!" If Louis XVI, good-hearted and stupid, had been of a more cruel nature, he would probably have kept the Bastille well filled. If the Bastille had been well filled with prisoners, the pockets of M. de Launay would have had a golden jingle satisfying to that economical noble. Such being the case, the garrison would not have been depleted to save expense, would have been able to resist the attack of the ill-organised mob, the Bastille would not have fallen, and *voilà*! the

whole history of the Revolution would have been written differently!

To return to the *fête* of the Federation. The ratification of the newly accepted constitution was, some thought, a final seal on the prosperity of France; that nothing now could go wrong; that a millennium was at hand, and so on. Unfortunately for this pleasant programme, there were political parties in *la belle France* of many and diverse opinions; it was impossible to please each, and so these Utopian prospects gradually faded into the mists of unreality. To-day, though, the nation was *en fête*. There were pavilions, triumphal arches, altars from which the fragrant incense ascended to heaven. Two hundred thousand men marched in a grand procession; half a million more watched the gorgeous mummery. The description of an eye-witness gives us the following:

"The *Champs de Mars* was formed into an immense amphitheatre, around which were erected forty rows of seats, raised one above the other with earth, on which wooden forms were placed. Twenty days' labour, animated by the enthusiasm of the people, accomplished what seemed to require the toil of years. Already in the *Champs de Mars* the distinctions of rank were forgotten, and, inspired by the same spirit, the highest and the lowest orders of citizens gloried in taking up the spade and assisting the persons employed in a work on which the common welfare of the state depended. Ladies took the instruments of labour in their hands to remove a little of the earth, that they might be able to boast that they also had assisted in the preparations in the *Champs de Mars*, and a number of old soldiers were seen voluntarily bestowing on their country at large the last remains of their strength. A young *abbé* of my acquaintance told me that the people had beat a drum at the door of the convent where he lived, and obliged the superior to allow all the monks to come out and work in the *Champs de Mars*! The

superior with great reluctance acquiesced. '*Quant à moi,*' said the young *abbé,* '*je ne demande pas mieux.*' At the upper end of the amphitheatre a pavilion was built for the reception of the King, the Queen, their attendants, and the National Assembly, covered with striped tent cloth of the National colours and decorated with streamers of the same beloved tints, and *fleurs de lys.* The whole flag was displayed above the spot where the King was seated. In the middle of the *Champs de Mars, L'Autel de la Patrie* was placed, on which incense was burned by priests dressed in long white robes with sashes of National ribbons. Several inscriptions were written on the altar, but the words visible at the greatest distance were: '*Le Nation, la Loi, le Roi!*' At the opposite and lower end of the amphitheatre were three triumphal arches, adorned with allegorical figures. The Gargantuan procession, composed of bands, grenadiers, Representatives, Deputies, the National Guard of Paris, the sacred Oriflamme, once the banner of the Kings of France "(proud old standard! how ill at ease you must have felt in such a mongrel company!), "battalions of children carrying standards with the words '*L'Espérance de la Patrie,*' squads from the Navy," and the usual miscellaneous rag-tag, and bobtail which goes to form a great parade.

"The procession, which was formed with eight persons abreast, entered the *Champs de Mars* beneath the triumphal arches with a discharge of cannon. The deputies placed themselves round the inside of the amphitheatre. Between them and the spectators the National Guards of Paris were ranged, and the seats were filled with *four hundred thousand people.* The middle of the amphitheatre was crowded with an immense multitude of soldiers. The National Assembly walked toward the pavilions, where they placed themselves with the King, the Queen, the Royal family, and their attendants, and opposite this group rose in perspective the hills of Passy and Chaillot, covered with people.

The standards, of which one was presented to each department of the Kingdom, as a mark of brotherhood by the citizens of Paris, were carried to the altar to be consecrated by the Bishop. High Mass was performed, after which M. de Lafayette, who had been appointed by the King Major-General of the Federation, ascended the altar, gave the signal, and himself took the National oath. In an instant every sword was drawn and every arm lifted up. The King pronounced the oath which the President of the National Assembly repeated; the solemn words were re-echoed by *six hundred thousand* voices, while the Queen raised the Dauphin in her arms, showing him to the people and the Army, at the same time the consecrated banners were displayed, the sun, which had been obscured by frequent showers in the course of the morning, burst forth, while the people lifted their eyes to heaven and called upon the Deity to look down and witness the sacred engagement into which they entered. A respectful silence was succeeded by the cries, the shouts, the acclamations of the multitude; they wept, they embraced each other, and then dispersed."

At that moment France gave herself to an excess of national ecstasy. The most absurd behaviour prevailed. Fancy the National Guard, while awaiting the arrival of that solemn procession, amusing the spectators by dancing in circles, cheered on and encouraged by half a million people, to whom there was nothing uncouth in ten thousand guards of the nation leaping madly, yelling, and performing monkey-like antics of which a silly schoolboy would have been ashamed; and this prior to the most impressive event which France had witnessed—an event which meant the loss of ancient privileges to an unfortunate king, and was the beginning of the end. . . . Could such a scene have been enacted anywhere but in *la belle France*?

The order prevailing on that day of carnival was superb. All carriages were forbidden for the twenty-

four hours, and so numerous were the entrances to the *Champs de Mars* that there was not the slightest crush or accident anywhere. The people grumbled that the king had not taken the national oath at the foot of the altar, where they could have seen him (oh, poor king! how little his sacrifice was appreciated!) instead of in the pavilion. Some of them crowded around M. de Lafayette and tried to make him promise to persuade the king to take the oath a second time!

"*Mes enfants,*" he said, "*le serment n'est pas une ariette, on ne peut pas le jouer deux fois*"; and one is forced to wonder if, after all, people who had so little comprehension as this were worth all the noble blood shed in France?

On dismounting from his horse at the *Château de la Muette* on his way to attend a dinner, given for the National Guard some hours later, Lafayette was nearly smothered by the embraces of the people. He called out, "*Mais, mes amis, vous m'étoufflez!*" and was only saved from suffocation by the prompt action of his aide, who made him mount his own horse and ride into the courtyard. This occurrence is supposed by some to have been a plot to assassinate the "Idol of the Nation" (*pro tem!*). That night the city was a blaze of light. The next, the *ci-devant* Duc d'Orléans gave a dinner to the public at the Palais Royale, where he and his friends watched the antics of the people from above. A succession of spectacles filled the following days. On the following Sunday Lafayette reviewed the National Guard in the *Champs de Mars*. The people waxed more and more enthusiastic. As on the day of the preceding *fête*, carriages were forbidden, and the whole city was illuminated, including the gardens of the Tuileries, the *façade* of the Louvre "being lighted in a most splendid manner. "The *Champs Élysées* resembled fairy land, well justifying its classical appellation; a myriad of lights twinkled and shone amid the luxuriant trees, mingling with the moon-

light of the summer eve, forming an *ensemble* never to be forgotten. The crowd surged and shouted and sang; laughed and knew no restraint. Parties of the National Guard rioted through the streets, a woman between every two men, and each time they chanced to meet a priest, laughingly compelled him to join in the gaiety, treating him as a woman by placing him between two soldiers, and sometimes sportively dressing him in their grenadier caps!

There were fireworks and transparencies of the popular heroes of the moment, Lafayette being prominent among them. His, and one of M. Bailly, were "placed as the highest mark of favour on either side of the celebrated statue of Henri IV, which graced the pont Neuf." The remains of the abhorred Bastille were converted into "a scene of beauty and pleasure, the ground being covered with fresh clods of grass," trees had been planted in rows and ornamented with a blaze of light; and loud above all, noisy and hysterical, the cry of "*Vive la nation*!"

What were the feelings of the daughter of the Hapsburgs, looking from a darkened window of the palace at the wild turmoil of that night?

CHAPTER X

PLACED in a position where the glare of publicity poured without cessation, constantly open to criticism and comment, Mme. de Lafayette was little annoyed by either. Taking no sides in the affairs of the moment, she, uninfluenced by friend or foe, held to those opinions which in her eyes were the just and proper course. She showed marvellous tact in the entertainment of the many guests, never offering her opinion on subjects in which her views might not be theirs, but never deviating from the course which she had taken. "What she suffered in her heart of hearts can only be understood by those who have heard her talk of the times." She received, among the many, Constitutional clergymen, "never concealing her opinions or love for the cause of the former Bishops." Though never offending or argumentative, she always expressed her opinions and views for which she had the courage of her convictions. Only once did she depart from the rule which she had laid down for herself, that of receiving all sorts of people equally well; it was the day when the Bishop of Paris, who had taken the oath, after his instalment came to dine at her husband's house; he did not, like his colleagues, come as a private individual, and she declined receiving him as bishop of the diocese. Accordingly, she "dined out that day, although her doing so was much remarked."

That distinguished patriot, Gouverneur Morris, who was in Paris at this time, was a constant visitor at the home of the Lafayettes', and in his memoirs speaks

of Mme. de Lafayette, who, on one occasion, according to his ideas, was somewhat cool in her manner. This was only a passing fancy, for at another time he mentions that she had one of the little girls come and dance for him. He proved a wonderfully good friend to that family when it was overtaken by such dire misfortunes, and it was on his money that they had to depend for the absolute necessities of life. His description of his friend Lafayette is too good a picture of the life led by that young patriot to be omitted:

"Lafayette was an extremely busy man. He was occupied in receiving people of all parties at all hours." He was "still the impetuous patriot" and, one is inclined to think, rather stubborn and headstrong in the matter of receiving advice or suggestion from those interested in his welfare.

"I tell him," writes Morris, "that an American constitution will not do for this country, and that two such chambers" (Senate and Representatives) "would not answer where there is a hereditary executive. That every country must have a constitution suited to its circumstances, and the state of France requires a higher toned government than that of America."

After this interview there is a hint in Morris's journal that Lafayette was somewhat cool toward his old friend, proving the adage that there are "three things better to give than to receive—medicine, kicks, and advice." Despite these slight differences, the friendship continued, and Morris says that at court "Lafayette spoke to me in terms of ancient familiarity," and he went frequently to his house, where, Morris complains, on one occasion that "Lafayette was late to dinner, and so busy he could scarcely remain a moment afterward." He therefore saw a good deal of his hostess, who was often glad to talk to a stranger outside and beyond the influences and self-interests of the political parties of the moment.

In the midst of these thrilling and dramatic happen-

ings, like a breath, a reflection from quiet Mount Vernon is the letter of General Washington, who writes on June 8, 1786, telling Lafayette that "Mrs. Washington had sent a barrel of hams to Mme. de Lafayette," and that "he does not know if they are better, or even as good, as those of France, but that they are of their own curing," adding, "the ladies of Virginia even consider their hams before themselves" and they "remember Lafayette's taste for them." Knowing of old the luscious flavour of this dainty, as prepared in the smokehouses of "Ole Virginny," Lafayette lost no time in having them appear on his stately table as soon as they arrived; writing to the donor, under date of October 26, 1786, that "I have received the hams and acknowledge the amiable intentions of Mrs. Washington. The first was served three days ago at a dinner composed of Americans, to whom your friend Chastelleux was invited." What the verdict of the company was, alas! history does not relate, but it was undoubtedly far from adverse.

Adrienne had her place in the public career of her husband, then the most talked of man in France. Every moment was filled, and, much against her inclinations, kept her from devoting as much time to her children as so fond a mother desired. She had them with her in the mornings and whenever she was able to snatch an hour from the cares of her busy household, ever the scene of lavish and constant hospitality. But, aside from her part in his public life, she had a great prominence of her own, though to her connection with the general she owed the reflected political interest which, on hearing that she had fallen ill, caused the *Assemblée des Représentants*, on June 8, 1786, to send a deputation of two members to ascertain the condition of her health, "as it was feared she had the measles." Want and misery ever found in her a listener. Generous to the poor, as her mother had taught

her to be, there was never much of her ample income not devoted to philanthropic purposes. Luckily, at that time her husband possessed an immense fortune and income, so no hint of financial worry came to deepen the cares of that gentle heart. Virginie says:

"Faith sanctified my mother's charity for the poor. Her activity made her useful to a great number of distressed persons. Good works greatly occupied her time, and she devoted herself to them as much as her family duties permitted her to do. She did not believe that she could conscientiously spend the smallest sum for her own pleasure; neither did she ever indulge in any fancy. She thought that whatever money is not required for keeping up social position, belongs to the poor, and that it is positively forbidden to employ it in any other manner. This principle, acknowledged in theory by all pious persons, but so often neglected in practice, was strictly adhered to by my mother."

Among the thousand and one occupations of that tempestuous time, Mme. de Lafayette accepted the requests made to her by each of the districts of Paris—sixty in number—to collect subscriptions at the blessings of their banners and other patriotic ceremonies. It is to be regretted that there is no record of the amount received. With each day, each instant, matters rushed to a crisis. It would be impossible to give a detailed account of the overwhelming mass of events. A bare outline is all the space allows; anything else would be a history of the Revolution. The unfortunate, irresolute king was the pivot on which things turned. Wishing to leave Paris and go to St. Cloud, on the Monday of Passion Week, 1791, to receive the sacrament from a non-juring priest, he announced his desire. (How differently would his predecessor, the fourteenth Louis have commanded his loyal subjects!) This was the signal for an uproar, and the king did

not put his wish into execution, despite the desire of Lafayette, who endeavoured to make him show some firmness. Angry at the indecision of his king, enraged at the action of the National Guard, which had not properly supported him in the presence of the people, and knowing that his authority would be as nothing in the coming storm which he could so well foresee, Lafayette resigned his command. On reaching home, the joy of his wife and her wonderful pleasure well supported him in the resolution he had taken. He then went to the country, leaving her to receive the municipality and the sixty battalions which came to beg him to resume his command. She replied gently and in judiciously chosen words to their addresses; and, though gracious and diplomatic to all, "marked clearly by her manner the distinction she made between the worthy ones and the blustering low creature like Santerre, whose behaviour had made her husband resign." Lafayette's return to private life was short-lived, and his wife's anxieties were soon to begin anew, for, in answer to the general voice of persuasion, after showing his displeasure for four days, he again resumed the command of that body, of which his opinion was somewhat uncertain, as Gouverneur Morris relates in the following conversation:

"I ask him if his troops will obey him, and he says they will not mount guard when it rains, but thinks they would readily follow him into action."

On June 21st the ineffectual flight of the royal family was stopped at Varennes, and they were obliged to return to Paris. Much blame was heaped on Lafayette at this time, and his position rendered exceedingly difficult. His desire to shield the unfortunate family of his king from wanton insult brought on him no little censure. "In no other circumstance of my father's life did my mother so much admire him as in the one I am now relating," writes Virginie, in reference to that occasion, so, though a man is never a hero to his valet

—or, in other words, to those who intimately surround him—in this instance Lafayette had the entire admiration and approval of the one to whom he always turned.

Before the Constitution had been occepted, Mme. de Lafayette hastened to the reception of the queen, then living at the Palais des Tuileries. She was the only woman there connected with the Republican, Patriot, or what they chose to call themselves, party. Ever fond of Marie Antoinette, whom she had known from her girlhood, in the days of the Petit Trianon, Adrienne believed, as did her husband, that politics should have no part in personal friendship. From her aunt, Mme. de Mouchy, her cousins, and many relatives, the sentiments and actions of the enthusiastic young republican had of late greatly estranged the gentle Adrienne, to her inestimable sorrow. Her tender heart was often torn at the coldness of former friends, though never for the smallest fraction of an infinite second wavering in its loyalty to the being whom her fond eyes considered perfect. The Duchesse d'Ayen, a staunch believer in the *ancien régime*, heart and soul with the royal party, and having little sympathy with aught but the good old conditions under which she had lived her life, sympathised deeply with her daughter in the unhappy and difficult position forced upon her by circumstances. With her usual broadmindedness, the kindly duchesse made allowance for those whom she was too Christian to condemn utterly, considering them as unfortunates, led astray by listening to evil counsel. Rare are those spirits so filled with true Christian charity that they are willing to admit some good, even in the person of their enemies! Passionately devoted to her husband, loving intensely those related to her, Adrienne's sufferings at this time were impossible to describe.

Harrowing, thrilling, and narrow was the escape which this intrepid woman had from being murdered on June 17, 1791, when a sudden and violent outbreak

was raised by the Jacobins. This party, even then, feared the outspoken incorruptibility of Lafayette, as he in turn hated them for their lawlessness and the brutality which they cloaked under the name of patriotism. Ever alert to injure one so popular, they began by murdering two men during a review on the *Champs de Mars*, at which Lafayette, by virtue of his office as commander-in-chief of the National Guard, was in command. Attempting, but happily foiled, in their desire to assassinate Lafayette, the mob dispersed as suddenly as it had gathered, the " brigands " forming the fearful resolution of finding and murdering Mme. de Lafayette, and afterward carrying her head on a pike to meet her husband on his return from the review! The home of the Lafayette family was situated not far from the *Champs de Mars*, and the news that the rabble were attempting to assassinate her husband came to Adrienne as a clap of thunder. She was in agony. True and heartfelt were her thanks to the Divine Being in whom she placed such implicit reliance, when another breathless messenger rushed in with the tidings that the mob was on its way to murder her, that not a moment must be lost in barricading the house. Virginie says:

" I remember the alarm of everybody in the house, and above all my mother's joy at the thought that the ' brigands ' who were now coming to attack her were no longer surrounding my father in the *Champs de Mars*. While embracing us with tears of joy, she took every necessary precaution against the approaching danger, above all, with the greatest relief of mind. The guard had been doubled and was drawn up before our house, but the ' brigands ' were very near entering my mother's apartment by the gardens on the place du Palais Bourbon, and were already climbing the low wall which protected us when a body of cavalry passed on the *place* and dispersed them."

When Mme. d'Ayen heard of this dreadful affair she reasoned seriously with Adrienne on the necessity of guarding herself carefully, both at home and abroad, begging her to take precautions to have the garden, by which the mob had almost succeeded in forcing an entrance, more carefully watched. This her daughter promised to do, peremptorily refusing, however, to listen to the suggestion that she should retire to the country, and remain until the crisis of affairs had passed. Her place was with her husband. They had passed through much sorrow and separation, and when death came she would be at his side. There was no shaking her determination. However, after this matters were a little more quiet for the time being. The king, having accepted the Constitution, the Constitutional Assembly ended its sittings. M. de Lafayette for the second time resigned his command of the National Guard, and, accompanied by his wife and children, started for Auvergne about the beginning of October. The journey was slow and frequently interrupted, as they were obliged to stop and acknowledge the many marks of sympathy lavished on them. At one point the general was presented with a bust of Washington, and a sword forged from the bolts of the Bastille.

At last they arrived at Chavinac, where they were warmly welcomed by Lafayette's aunt, the Comtesse de Chavinac, then in her seventy-second year, and joined later by Mme. d'Ayen and the saintly Louise, Mme. de Noailles. The society of her children and these dear ones did much to restore Mme. de Lafayette to her normal state of mind and health. So upset and excited had she been by the terrible events of the last few months, that she was too exhausted to do more than take a passive interest in the everyday life, which in her normal condition would have afforded her the greatest pleasure. It was a very considerable time before her health had resumed its usual condition. She

was utterly worn out. Since her marriage at that exceedingly early age, her life had been a veritable gamut of emotions, and, in the majority, emotions which were far from happy. But Adrienne de Lafayette was one of those beings whom the hand of fate had marked for its own. She was born to endure much sorrow and misery.

CHAPTER XI

THE home of the Lafayettes, Chavinac, in Auvergne, is in itself worthy of some description, from the fact of its being the cradle of that famous family. Situated in the heart of a wildly picturesque and romantic country, at the southeastern extremity of the plain of Chalier-gues, of which Paulhaguet is considered the capital, almost touching the mountains of Foix, solidly planted upon a rugged, rocky promontory, washed by the ceaseless flow of a brawling rivulet, looms Chavinac. Sombre trees cloak the surrounding hills, peaceful cattle browse on the slopes where of yore the impregnable walls rebuffed the adventurous marauding baron, who fain would demonstrate to his satisfaction the primitive laws of "*meum* and *tuum*!"

According to tradition the manor of Chavinac dates back to the fourteenth century, but owing to many vicissitudes and the idiosyncrasies of its architecture, it is difficult to speak with certainty on the subject. Almost totally destroyed by fire in 1701, its original construction was replaced by that which one sees to-day. It entirely lacks the charm and elegance of many châteaux, being too heavy for actual beauty. Rebuilt in 1701, restored in 1791 by the architect Vaudoyer, the château de Chavinac is to-day "a great parallelogram, each side of which measures twenty-three mètres and eighteen mètres in height. At the end of each angle stands a round, solidly built tower fifteen mètres high and twenty mètres in circumference, terminating in a bell tower." The principal façade faces the north-

west, but the château is so amply supplied with windows on all sides that the distinction of "front" and "back" lose their significance. Fortunately for the château, its picturesque environment of wood, mountain, and stream, its superb elevation and luxuriant background of trees save it from being reproached with its chief defect—that of heaviness.

The ground floor at the present day serves merely for the domestic offices, kitchens, storerooms, and the thousand and one trifles connected with a large country place. On the first floor are several fine apartments, all with their history, their tender memories of "dear dead women," all now still and ghostly, awaking only at the chance footfall; uninhabited since the last visit of Lafayette in 1829 to his ancestral estate. The most remarkable room of this floor is a gallery thirty-nine feet long, which, in the good old days of yore, served as a dining room and the scene of many a mad revel, when the lords returned from the war or had success in the chase. Wine and wassail are gone; rollicking lilt rings no more to the rafters; the walls are demurely hung with the most chaste of pictures; busts of Washington, Franklin, Voltaire, Brutus, Cæsar, Rousseau, Socrates, and others of that ilk gaze vacantly down, giving a very good idea of the beliefs and sympathies of a former owner. One side of the room is lined with Lafayette's library, a collection relating chiefly to the War of American Independence and the French Revolution, more than a thousand volumes, each bearing the arms and proud motto of the general—"*Cur non?*"

The grand *salon* is square in shape and decorated mostly by family portraits: The general in civil dress, painted by Ary Schaffer in 1819, those of his father and mother, and aunt, Mme. de Chavinac, are the most interesting. To a little room, poorly lighted by one window, and situated on the first floor of the tower of the north façade, tradition ascribes the birth of the young Lafayette who was so to upset his own country,

and aid in their struggle those across the seas. This room, with its green carpet, many souvenirs, and pictures, has no longer any of the original furniture. What it contains is uninterestingly modern.

The village of Chavinac, a collection of some fifty cottages nestling close to the château, grouped around a modest church, and two schools, the gift of Lafayette, owed what prosperity it had to the interests of the various masters and mistresses of the château; without their kindly supervision the agricultural activity waned, and a peaceful somnolence pervaded the atmosphere. With his usual desire for the betterment of his fellow-man, the general, during his infrequent visits, busied himself by trying to improve certain conditions which had prevailed from time immemorial. It is to his activity that the borough owed its two annual fairs and the right of having a market each week. He constructed a house where they might learn the arts of spinning and weaving wool and cotton. He built a very necessary road—as usual, at his own expense—and arranged that there should be a resident physician ever in their midst, and for this he also paid, that the poor might have his services free of all expense. This "chirurgien docteur" was a character, known not only to the inhabitants of Chavinac, but to the entire countryside. Born at Carpentras in 1756, he died at his adopted home, Chavinac, in 1831. Jean Ange Guitandry, "with his great height, knee breeches of the *ancien régime*, cocked hat, and hair braided into a club," could be remembered by some of the old people of the village (1881). Unchanged by war or peace, his tender care of the sick—albeit domineering—never yielded to partisan feeling, nor was his "picturesque fluency of provincial oath" ever changed or subdued by joy or sorrow. Brusque in his manner, he represented a type of "benevolent executioner." In his office of Mayor of Chavinac, the good man was able to be of immense service to the family of his patron

From a rare unpublished print in the collection of M. GODEFROY MEYER, PARIS

during the revolutionary tempest. After France was again at peace, he was bade to live at the château, which from that period became his home and where, in 1831, he passed peacefully from this world. From the Commune he received the annual pension of 600 francs.

Agricultural improvements were not the only ones which the general contemplated. Living far from Chavinac, as he had done for so many years, it was natural that there should be many repairs necessary. From the time of his father's death it had been inhabited little except by his aunts, as his mother preferred the life at Paris, where she visited her mother and father until her early death. Consequently, there were many points at which the mason's trowel and the patching up of the carpenter were sadly required. With his preference for a country life, Lafayette entered heart and soul into the plans for the improvement and embellishing of his property. He had the architect Vaudoyer, a man of some note, come to Chavinac, and discussed with him the details of the work. This Vaudoyer must have been somewhat of a character, enthusiastic and erratic, if one may judge from a letter which he wrote to the general after the latter had left home to resume his public career. The following is the "extraordinary" document:

CHAVINAC, July 4, 1792.

" . . . The citizens of Chavinac very much regret your weather cocks, which, according to your orders, I have taken down. They fear that now they do not have them to look at, they will no longer be able to sow, reap, or to make hay, or choose the best time to cut wood. The plan of Mme. de Lafayette is to replace some of them elsewhere than on your house, but there is no place but the house of the *Curé* or the belfry, and to put it there it would be necessary to take off the cross, which might prove a subject of inconvenience.

Could not they be put on some neighbouring hill, or on a tree of Liberty? I have received the nine pictures of the revolution that you ordered from M. Hoüel before your departure; they are 'l'Événement du Prince Lambesec,' 'Prise d'armes aux Invalides,' 'Prise de la Bastille,' 'Intérieur de la Bastille,' 'Quête de Mme. de Lafayette au sepulchre,' 'Bénédiction des drapeau à Notre Dame,' 'Arrivé de roi à Paris le 17 Juillet,' 'Arrivé de roi à Paris le 6 Octobre.' Had the times permitted I should have had pleasure in raising a monument to liberty on the ruins of the Bastille; and, if at a future time, even without being impelled by so splendid and inspiring a subject, I can have some success, I hope, that fired by an equally powerful motive, I shall be able to obtain honour. My sojourn at Chavinac hinders the execution of these thoughts, but I console myself in the thought that if I did not raise the tree of Liberty, I built the temple of him who was its defender in America, (le galerie Washington,) and the sanctuary of him who first brought, planted, and protected it in France, (your dwelling.)"

Strange brain! which could produce such a jumble of weather-cocks and "temples" of liberty! what would have been the ultimate appearance of old Chavinac, had the restorations been fully completed, would be hard to say, but they were abandoned later, owing to the march of political events. The weaving establishment became a source of much profit to the little community. It was under the direction of an Englishman, skilled in such craft, but for some unknown reason it finally closed its doors amid great regret from those who had profited. After his return from America, the general, struck with the agriculture in that country, had come over from England, from Suffolk, a *chef de pratique* (practical farmer), and distinguished agriculturist named John Dyson, in whose hands he placed the management of the *demesne* of

Chavinac, with directions to spare nothing to make it a model of perfection, with the desire of setting an example of what rural farming should be to the labourers of the village. Under the management of Dyson, who passed a year or more there, the barns were filled with many new and strange farming implements, and the breed of cattle greatly improved. To this day there are descendants of a very distinguished race of Suffolk pigs, imported by Dyson, which still bear the name of "Tonkin."

Another quaint and interesting bit of information about the château is the description of the room occupied by Mme. de Lafayette while there. Meagre it is and brief, and one can almost see the ignorant commissary and his underlings, never before admitted to the hall, much less to the bedroom of the lady of the castle, pulling, feeling, and examining the objects which they saw for the first time, and racking their peasant brains for the right appellations by which to distinguish them in the inventory taken for the satisfaction of those ruling in the name of the Republic, "One and indivisible." There was "a bed, composed of two mattresses, one feather bed, and one of hair, one counterpane of quilted linen and one of crimson satin. The canopy of the bed, its head, curtains, and bolster in crimson satin. 1 *commode* with four drawers and a marble top; a small book case of walnut, containing about 200 volumes; eight arm chairs upholstered in tapestry; two bergères (with) cushions; three arm chairs in velvet; two window curtains in white 'toile'; two maps, those of France and the département; 1 card table; 1 backgammon board; 1 mahogany table; one forte-piano,' and one walnut table; 1 picture representing the destruction of the Bastille; five family pictures; one pier glass in two pieces; 1 clock; two sconces at either side of the chimney, and two candlesticks of silvered copper."

Poor "Noailles Lafayette," as she signs herself,

what a troubled existence was hers! Of all people she was fitted for and longed to enjoy a career of domestic tranquillity. Greatness was "thrust upon her. Scarcely had she rested two months in the calm of Chavinac, when her husband was appointed to command one of the three armies formed at this time. He left Chavinac in December, 1791. Shortly after, her mother and sister were obliged to return to Paris. She bade them farewell calmly, little thinking that the parting was for eternity. . . . Her sister, Mme. de Montagu, about this time went to England with her husband, leaving Mme. de Lafayette with her fourteen-year-old daughter and her aunt for her only companions; the children were too young to be of much pleasure or anything but a care. The violence of old Mme. de Chavinac's political feelings and opinions made it impossible to discuss with any calmness the events of the hour. During Lafayette's stay at the château there had been many and animated arguments on the subject of his backsliding from the ways of his forefathers; which conversations usually ended in both parties becoming exceedingly heated and dropping the matter for further reference. It is doubtful if Mme. de Chavinac would have permitted another professing such heresy to remain under the same roof which had sheltered those whose name was illustrious, but her nephew was the privileged member of the family. He had long been the last of his race, though sturdy young George bade fair to become an ornament to his distinguished family. So once more Mme. de Lafayette was obliged to find what comfort she could in prayer, her faith in her husband being ever the guiding star, as it had been in the time when he first left her, a child, to go and fight for the American patriots.

In December Lafayette had gone to join his regiment. In the blustering days of March war was declared, that part of the army under his command being the first to engage. The death of M. de Gouvion, who

had been a major-general of the National Guard, brought home keenly to the anxious woman the extreme danger of her husband's position. Ever acting for his good, she stifled her wish to join him, though having his permission to do so, fearing that she might hamper his movements or that he might be accused of trying to put his family in a place of safety, she decided to remain at Chavinac. Life there was not lacking in excitement. Shortly after this, on one occasion, a party of *Volontiers de la Gironde* passed through the village on their way to join the army. They behaved very violently, some of them threatening to set fire to her house. Mme. de Lafayette was a woman of action, and had not come of a line of soldiers without inheriting some of their qualities. She promptly invited all the officers to dinner, and gave orders that the men of that detachment, billeted in the village, should be fed at her expense. Her prompt action created the desired effect. Her dignified demeanour commanded respect, and her evident loyalty saved her from further molestation. After this she enjoyed comparative peace from annoyances of this kind.

CHAPTER XII

THE position into which circumstances forced M. de Lafayette at this time was one of unsatisfactory and extremely critical nature. Never, perhaps, in the history of the world, has there been a period when self-interest and intrigue, masquerading in the guise of patriotism, was so strong, so dominantly powerful. There were many true and sincere patriots, but they were in the minority and unable to stem the rush of those who cared nothing for the cause they so badly championed, seeing in it but a means of further enriching and gaining honours for themselves. Utterly incorruptible, and standing for that reason apart from the mass, Lafayette gained the hatred of many who were less oblivious to personal aggrandisement. One of the intrigues of this moment was a widespread plot to ruin him. He had, by his practical knowledge of military affairs, been able to make many reforms in the army, replacing the poor discipline and luxuriousness of former days with a simplicity and order which was the first step toward creating that magnificent force which a few years later conquered Europe and threatened the Orient.

In regard to this intrigue. While at Paris he received orders on March 24th, in the evening, to form an army corps and train of artillery, and to be at Givet on the 30th. This, to the disappointment of his enemies, he did; accomplishing the unexpected march of fifty-six leagues in five days, and with troops largely composed of very raw material. It was in one of the

skirmishes shortly after that M. de Gouvion was killed. The most daring and fearless action of Lafayette's career was probably that celebrated letter in which he attacked the Jacobins, and which caused such terrible excitement at this period. He was, above all, before all, a patriot; he saw that the enemies of his country, at home and abroad, had formed plots to make the advocates of liberty commit such excesses and behave in such an outrageous manner that sensible people would turn from them in sheer disgust. The Jacobins were the most extreme and furious partisans of liberty; their lawlessness disgusted him; he attacked them. Can one picture the excitement when that famous letter was read in the National Assembly on the fair summer day of June 16th?

"GENTLEMEN: The public cause is in danger. The fate of France depends chiefly on her representatives. The nation looks to them for safety; but by giving herself a constitution she has prescribed to them the only course by which they can save her. . . .

"You are placed in difficult circumstances. France is threatened abroad and agitated at home. While foreign courts announce the audacious project of attacking our national sovereignty, and declare themselves the enemies of France, our domestic enemies, intoxicated with fanaticism or pride, cherish chimerical hopes and harass us by their insolent animosity.

"It is your duty, gentlemen, to put down these enemies; and you will only have power to do so inasmuch as you are constitutional and just.

"It is no doubt your wish to put them down; but cast your eyes on what is passing both in the bosom of your own Assembly and around you.

"Can you conceal from yourselves that a faction, and to avoid vague denunciations, the Jacobin faction, has caused all these disorders? I here openly accuse that faction. Organised like a separate power in its

resource and its ramifications, blindly directed by a few ambitious leaders, that sect forms a distinct corporation amongst the French people, whose power it usurps by subduing its representatives and agents.

"This faction in public sittings style respect for the laws, aristocracy, and their infraction, patriotism. They pronounce eulogies on the assassins of Versailles, panegyrise the crimes of Jourdan, and the recital of the assassinations which sullied the city of Metz drew from them infernal acclamations of approval. . . .

"It is I who denounce to you this Jacobin sect; I, who without referring to my past life, may reply to those who suspect me: 'Stand forward at this critical juncture, when the character of every individual is about to be tried, and let us see which of us, most inflexible in his principles, most firm in his resistance, will best brave these obstacles and dangers which traitors conceal from their country, but which true citizens know how to estimate and oppose.'"

It was a remarkable letter, and brought a storm of abuse and vituperation on the head of its writer, for its scathing truth could not be denied. A majority of the Assembly agreed with Lafayette, and he received much praise from people of conservative ideas, and from those to whom the welfare of their country was dear. By the leaders of the Jacobins he was denounced to the Assembly. He was called an "Aristocrat" by those very Jacobins whose ministerial orders to him had been, while in the Netherlands, "that he was not to yield to his democratic ideas." At the same time the court party circulated libels, in which they accused him of being a royalist, and making his army "a seditious rampart" for himself!

What was the strong influence at work which had caused the royal family to conceive so bitter a hatred for their—once—friend? So intense was it that they refused offers from Lafayette which, had they been ac-

cepted, would have enabled them to leave France in safety."

"He would save the king," said the court party, "but not royalty"; for, to the court party, constitutional royalty was nothing. The queen replied, "that it would be too much to owe their lives once more to M. de Lafayette." It is more than likely that the secret letters promising help from the coalition made the royal family refuse to listen to advice which would have proved their salvation. Naturally, they could not look on the patriots without prejudice, and they hoped that their friends would soon bring armies to the relief. Repulsed by those he would have helped, denounced by his enemies for striving to give that help, hated by those who feared him, Lafayette travelled to the frontier and joined that division of the army which was under his command.

What harrowing anxiety did those at Chavinac suffer during this time! Each day brought more alarming tidings. First came the news of the bloody tenth of August. Adrienne's heart beat sickeningly as she pictured her mother, who, all that day of slaughter could do nothing but listen between the closed shutters of the house where she was living, in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, with Mme. de Grammont, as the situation of the Hôtel de Noailles, between the Tuileries and the Jacobin Club, had made it an unsafe place of abode. Her father, the Duc d'Ayen, just returned from a visit to Switzerland, which was necessitated by his health, was at the Tuileries, fighting in defense of his king. The hoarse cries of the infuriated mob could be heard across the river; the echo of the cannons broke the deathlike stillness which the white lips of those waiting women were too drawn to break as wife and daughter prayed together for those who were fighting in the palace. The servants moved to and fro on tiptoes, tremblingly crowding near Mme. d'Ayen, who courageously put self aside, and tried to reassure those dependent on

her. When night came she slipped from a side door, dressed in the garments of one of her maids, and, accompanied by a trusted man-servant, joined that band of searchers who roved to and fro, candle in hand, among the peaceful dead, piled in systematic heaps on the bridges and in the garden before the palace, like so much wood, and stripped of all rank or ensignia. Fervent were her prayers of thanksgiving, for those she loved were not among the dead.

The Duc d'Ayen had managed to escape from the mob, and was in safety, and M. de Grammont, also, had been fortunate in eluding those human bloodhounds. All this, however, Mme. de Lafayette did not know. The news of the attack on the palace, and the consequent wanton slaughter was all she heard for some time. Whether her mother, her father, her sister lived or died she was unable to conjecture. She waited in silent agony. What the hours would bring no mortal might hazard a guess. Her bitter cup was full. Father and mother in the greatest danger, perhaps even now dead; sisters scattered to the four winds; her husband, with a price upon his head, deprived of his command, and, once "the idol of the nation," obliged to flee to Switzerland! What a burden for one tender heart to bear! And, added to this, not even the poor satisfaction of knowing if her husband had managed to effect his escape. . . . Finally, when the suspense had become almost more than she could bear, she received a letter through her sister, Mme. de Noailles, telling her that he had been successful. Her joy was as great as her grief had been profound. She was almost happy, but the poor old aunt was utterly inconsolable, and could comprehend nothing but the fact that her beloved nephew had left his country, and that she would probably never see him again. Not pausing to reflect that, had it not been for her sense of duty toward this ancient relative, she might have shared the dangers of the last year with her beloved husband; perhaps even

now, having the joy of being with him in his exile, Adrienne resolutely put aside thoughts of the "might have been" to face the stern reality confronting her.

How much sorrow some men bring to those women who love them! How many devoted hearts they cause to ache; what tears are shed for them; and the cause to which they devote themselves is not grateful; the country for which they give their youth, their blood, their wealth, is a selfish mistress, a Moloch, consuming many . . . and yet, how few think of the lonely hearth, while led onward by that chimerical myth which men call glory! Looking back to ancient history, it would be instructive to know just what were the opinions and sentiments of those Spartan dames when their dearly beloveds took to the war path? Underneath the classic togas were hearts, just as of to-day—what were their feelings?

Prepared for the worst, not knowing what might happen next, Mme. de Lafayette, in expectation of the house being pillaged, burned and destroyed all her papers, hid her valuables, among them the sword of honour given by the United States, on August 24, 1779, to Lafayette, and presented by the grandson of Benjamin Franklin to the general. It was very handsome, being made of massive gold, with emblematic designs illustrative of Lafayette's setting out for America to help the cause. Hidden for years near the château, it lay buried unknown to all while the Terror reigned, and the land of the Lafayettes passed from them at the auction which was held by the "nation." On George Lafayette's return from America he had it dug up, finding the blade totally destroyed by rust. "He managed to hide the handle, and took it to his father in Holland, though it was then very dangerous to take gold out of France. After the eighteenth Brumaire, Lafayette returned to France, and had the blade of the sword presented to him by the National Guard on his

retirement in 1791, put in this handle. This blade was forged from the bolts and bars of the Bastille."

She arranged to send her children into the country at the first alarm. A priest, *assermenté* offered her a place in the mountains which would be quite safe. Here she sent George and his tutor, M. Frestel. They departed under cover of the night. The girls she sent to a small town about two leagues away (Langeac). Having in this manner relieved herself of some anxiety, she returned to Chavinac to remain with her aunt, who, somewhat selfishly, would not be induced to leave her home. After this Mme. de Lafayette waited with calmness and resignation what might happen, thanking Heaven, with fervent prayers, that her husband was out of the hands of those who wished him ill.

Taking advantage of a slight lull in the tempest of affairs, she went to Brioude, the most important town in the district, where she received many marks of sympathy and respect. True to the principles and opinions of her absent one, she refused the sympathy offered by several *aristocrate* ladies, saying "that she would take as an insult any token of esteem not shared with her husband." Staunch in her faith, she publicly attended mass said by a priest who had not taken the oath. As a matter of precaution, she requested that seals should be affixed upon her house by order of the "district," in this way gaining some slight protection from the hourly expected "brigands." Much respect was shown her by the commissioners, the word *émigré* was not inscribed on the official report, so she comforted herself with the slight hope that the Administration was not unfriendly. Yielding to the entreaties of her daughters, and taking courage from the more tranquil state of the country, she took them home with her, being somewhat cheered about this time by receiving two letters from her husband, but still greatly agitated about his arrest.

She was lulled in false security. On the morning

of September 10, 1792, while still at her devotions, the house was rudely entered by a party of armed men, who invaded the privacy of her room, being led by one M. Puy, who "was suspected of having lately murdered a prisoner." An order from the Committee of Public Safety, signed by M. Roland, ordered her to come to Paris. The officers were under the charge of the commissary.

Mme. de Lafayette showed no anxiety or agitation. Swiftly she made her preparations, not wishing to keep these uncouth soldiers waiting. One of them boasted to her "that he had killed his officer, because he was an aristocrat." Paying no attention to him, she calmly and affectionately bade farewell to her clinging children, who had escaped from their governess and run to their mother's room, thus betraying their presence to the soldiers, and preventing the carefully laid plan of hiding them being put into effect. The soldiers broke open her writing desk, confiscating all the papers it contained, among which were many letters from her husband.

"You will see in them, sir," she said to the commissary, "that if there had been tribunals in France, M. de Lafayette would have submitted to them, certain as he was that not an action of his life could incriminate him in the eyes of real patriots."

"Nowadays, madame," he answered, "public opinion is the only tribunal."

While waiting for the courageous prisoner, those noisy, dirty soldiers overran the house, rummaging in the hoarded treasures of years, pocketing such trifles as struck their fancy. One of them, seeing a number of ancient pictures, rudely demanded of the old housekeeper, who was feeble and half-blind with age: "Who are these? Some grand aristocrats, no doubt?"

"Good people who are no more," she answered. "If they were alive things would not be going so badly as they are now."

In reply to these remarks, the soldiers amused themselves by running their bayonets through the pictures, undeterred by the torrent of abuse which the dame hurled at the heads of such vandals, calling all the saints to descend in person and rend them with swift justice.

The first stage of the unhappy journey was most trying to Mme. de Lafayette, but, in contrast to the lack of consideration shown her by the soldiers, the signs of sympathy and kindness displayed by the humble people in the towns and villages through which they passed were as balm to her wounded heart. She appreciated these demonstrations of her lowly friends even more from the fact that they braved the anger of the authorities to pay their respects to the wife of one who had always been their friend. As the soldiers were tired, the party stopped at Foix for the night. Old Mme. de Chavinac, whom human persuasion had never before induced to leave Chavinac, had insisted on accompanying her niece, but never once was heard to complain, though the travelling of that day, more particularly under such unpleasant circumstances, was very fatiguing, even for those younger than she. The ladies were followed from home by some of the servants who, having mingled with the crowd, hoped in this way to learn something to aid the cause of the prisoners.

On reaching Le Puy, on the following day, Mme. de Lafayette requested to be immediately conducted to the " Département."

" I respect orders coming from the Administration," she said, " as much as I detest those coming from elsewhere."

Scarcely a week previous, a prisoner being conducted through this town had been murdered on reaching the suburbs. Naturally, much apprehension was felt for the safe conduct of Mme. de Lafayette and her daughters, to whom she said:

" If your father knew you were here, how anxious

he would be, but at the same time what pleasure your conduct would give him."

The prisoners arrived safely at the "Département," with no annoyance except the hoarse cries of the mob, and the stones which were thrown at them and fell into the carriage. As the "Département" had been convened immediately on their arrival, Mme. de Lafayette went at once before the ministers, under whose protection she placed herself, saying, "it represented to her the power of the people, which she always respected."

"You receive, Messieurs, your orders from M. Roland or from whosoever you please. I only receive them from you, and I give myself up as your prisoner."

Was not this speech an exhibition of tact, soothing to the *amour propre* of rustic authority? Adrienne de Noailles Lafayette was not the descendant of generations of famous courtiers and diplomats without receiving some impress of the diplomacy which had raised them to such height and power in the council of their sovereigns. At her desire, the letters of her husband which had been seized were copied before being sent to Paris to the Assembly, as she well knew how easily falsehoods are manufactured from innocent material. She asked permission to read them aloud, saying, in answer to the suggestion that it might prove painful, "On the contrary, I find support and comfort in the feelings they contain."

Another instance of her thoughtful tact and care for others, lest their kindness to her should prove compromising to them, is shown by the manner in which she openly and reproachfully upbraided the *maire*, M. Bertrand, for having so long ceased his visits to her house at Chavinac. In this way she wished to free him from the suspicion of seeming to show favour to her, as his kindness during that interview might have raised some such thought in the ever alert minds of his colleagues. At the suggestion of Mme. de Lafayette

that it was useless to make her journey to Paris, she was granted permission, after much haggling, argument, and useless delays, by the "Département" to live at her own home, first having given her *parole*. This permission was due to the efforts of that excellent man, M. Montfleury, but it was a long time before success crowned his efforts, and a voluminous correspondence was carried on. The authorities themselves wrote to M. Roland that the state of the country made it unsafe for the prisoner to go to Paris, and Mme. de Lafayette herself wrote to M. Brissot, whom she had formerly known, the following letter:

LE PUY, September 12, 1792.

"MONSIEUR: I believe you to be sincerely fanatic for liberty. It is a compliment I pay to very few people at this moment. I shall not examine whether that fanaticism, like religious fanaticism, does not generally defeat its own object, but I cannot persuade myself that one who has done so much for the emancipation of the negroes can be the agent of tyranny. I believe that if you are impassioned by the ends which your party seeks, at least you will abhor the means it employs. I am sure that you esteem, I might almost say that you respect, M. de Lafayette as a sincere and courageous friend of liberty, even when you persecute him because his opinions are different from your own as to the means of establishing freedom in France, and supported by courage like his and by faithful adherence to his oaths, are contrary to the party in which you have enlisted and to your new revolution. I believe all this, and therefore I apply to you, although disdaining to address myself to others; if I am mistaken, tell me so, and I shall have troubled you for the last time.

"A *lettre de cachet* from M. Roland, of the 2d September, in compliance with a resolution of the Committee of General Safety, dated August 19th, caused me to be brought here on Monday last by an indi-

vidual, Justice of the Peace in this town, who had received orders to convey me to Paris with my children, if they were found with me, after having communicated with the 'Département' of the Haute-Loire in the jurisdiction of which I had fixed my retreat. I state with sorrow that the *Procureur Général* syndic of the 'Département' had the weakness to give M. Roland's commissary an order for an armed force, and with gratitude that the commissary and his men paid us every sort of attention on the way. My eldest daughter was with me, and far from trying to hide herself, she rejoiced that the orders were common to us both. An aunt of my husband's, for whose sake I remained separated from him all last winter, has been kind enough to accompany me here.

"When M. Aulagnier, the Commissary, asked me where I desired to be conveyed in this town, I answered that my wish was to put myself under the protection of the municipality and go to the 'Département,' whose business it was in the town of Le Puy to give orders at Chavinac, my place of residence, belonging to the district of Brioude and to the 'Canton' of Paulhaguet. What I said on entering the Assembly room, and what was decided upon by the *Conseil Général* and the Commissary who arrested me, is recorded in the official report, in which I expressed my wishes and made my request to the 'Département.' My aunt desired me to speak of the fatigues of a journey after the many trials my health has undergone, but I would not allege a pretext when I had such good reasons for not going to Paris. I was about to speak of the dangers which the events of the 2d September made one fear, but having asked the date of M. Roland's letter and having found that it had been written on that very day, I was desirous of sparing remarks which might be wounding to his feelings; for, although I do not wish to address myself to him, still I would not insult him. I merely said to the members of the 'Département' that, as I was under

their protection, it was their business to foresee and to prevent the dangers I might have to fear. They intend writing in concert with M. Aulagnier, and I shall trust to their prudence.

"I do not know what the answer will be. It is easy to see that if it is dictated by justice it will restore me to complete liberty. If it is according to my heart's desire, I shall be allowed to join my husband in England as soon as he is delivered from prison, in order that we may go to America and establish ourselves together so soon as the voyage can be effected. But if I am to be kept as a hostage, my captivity would be less hard to bear were I to choose Chavinac as my prison on *parole*, and on the responsibility of the municipality of my village. If you wish to serve me you will have the satisfaction of doing a good action by mitigating the fate of one who is unjustly persecuted and who, you well know, has neither the means nor the wish to injure.

"I consent to owe you that service.

"NOAILLES-LAFAYETTE."

This (since) famous letter she despatched by messenger to Paris, to meet with a reception which could not be foretold. It must depend on the mood of the recipient at its hour of arrival, on the political phase of the preceding moment, on ten thousand trivial things impossible to prophesy. Mme. de Lafayette placed it in the hands of Heaven, and hoped.

CHAPTER XIII

MOST things for which we wish come to us in the course of time, but when they come it is too late—we have ceased to care. Almost immediately the permission to reside in her own home had been granted, Mme. de Lafayette learned that her beloved husband, instead of being set free, had been delivered up by the Coalition to the King of Prussia. This, when she had given her *parole* not to leave Chavinac. . . . It was almost too cruel to bear with resignation. Had she been free to come and go to Paris, she might have been of the greatest service to the prisoners by using what influence she had at her command. She was thrown in the deepest despair, and so great was the depth of her misery that the great consolation of her life, religion, was scarcely enough to make her bear this added sorrow.

It is extraordinary, looking back on the affairs of Lafayette about this time, to what a degree private, and shame to say it, French spite and malice entered into the chain of events which kept him so long captive. There is very little reason to think that the King of Prussia or the Emperor of Austria had any particular personal feeling in the matter. Lafayette was to them a state prisoner, merely known by his number. At the audience which the latter sovereign accorded Mme. de Lafayette at a later date—the one in which she obtained permission to share the captivity of her husband—his reply, "I grant it to you; as for his liberty, that is impossible; my hands are tied," makes it seem that a strong influence must have been exerted

on persons in high position to keep the loyal Frenchman from his country.

By the party of the Jacobins he was hated; they had every reason to keep him in prison. They were at that time very powerful. He knew too much. He stood, a patriot of absolute and incorruptible integrity, of unsullied honour, and this among those who from the very dregs had risen to power. He was hated by the aristocrats—the court party—for his republicanism, by the Republicans for the control of self which distinguished him and for his refusal to join in the excesses perpetrated in the name of *Liberté*. Those principles of republicanism, of equal rights of man, which had been so successfully established in America by that long and exhausting struggle of the young colony, and of which he had been, and was, an enthusiastic exponent, were distorted by his countrymen into nightmares too hideous for words. The rebellion by which the colonies of America had thrown off their yoke had been a struggle worthy of its object. It was an honest fight, waged by the bone and sinew of the country; a struggle in which no one was wantonly injured; which consisted of men meeting men in open war. It was purely a war of patriotism, of convictions. The men whose brains directed the struggle were men of cool heads and good, sensible ideas, well fitted to carry to a conclusion what they had undertaken only after much thought and reflection. But the French Revolution—what fearful pictures does the mere name call to the imagination! That an upheaval of some sort was inevitable, the mind of the statesman well realised; he had expected it for long past. Without going into details, the country did what other countries had done, but it did it differently. The Magna Charta, compelled by those unyielding barons, had given rights to England in the far-off ages, after the gallant *Cœur de Lion* slept his last warrior sleep, and uncertain, treacherous John reigned in his stead. Then the people imagined

themselves grown wiser, and decapitated unfortunate Charles Stuart. What did they accomplish? For twelve years a Puritan protectorate—then? The fascinating wanderer returned to his own, and the natural spirits of the nation, swathed in suppressing sackcloth and ashes for more than a decade, burst forth, and the court of the " Merry Monarch " has come down to us as an example of what followed the psalm-singing " Praise-God-Barebones " gentlemen. The establishment of revolutions is a bad precedent; but if they are necessary to the welfare of mankind, let them be done quickly and decently, if one may use that expression.

That time must bring changes is undeniable. That the condition of a country, ground down by the iron heel of feudalism, was deplorable, is an acknowledged fact. By men hungry for bread, rumours of the exaggerated luxury at the court were not received in that benign frame of mind which is the prerogative of true and well-fed Christians. In fact, they were not cordial when the *menu* of a court banquet was mentioned. They did not pause to think that the money wrung from them was spent in the country. It did not return to them. Some one became rich. As a rule, the nobles spent lavishly and were always in debt. They could not be accused of hoarding. Who, then, had the wealth? If *Jacques Bonhomme* had paused to reason, which he did not possess the brains to do, he would have found that the *bourgeoise*, the smug shopkeeper, who each Sunday promenaded with his family, plump, well-clad, and prosperous, was the one to whom he should have clamoured for a distribution of wealth. That the merchants of Paris had long been a synonym for wealth, is a fact little noticed in discussing these times. They had been rich for hundreds of years. To this day remains the hôtel of one Pierre Beauvais, who began life as a pedlar, amassing an enormous fortune from the sale of his ribbons and trinkets, with which,

or part of which, he purchased a title from Anne of Austria or Mazarin or whomsoever the proper person was. He had the shrewd sense to marry Catherine Bellier, once first *femme-de-chambre* to the beautiful Anne—a woman who did not scruple to turn to account any information of which this confidential position had made her the possessor to gain the end she had in view. "One-eyed, odious, and of profligate life," a contemporary describes her, she was a great favourite with her late mistress, though whether from fear or love would be hard to surmise. She cleverly induced Anne to give her, as a present, all the stone required in the construction of the Hôtel Beauvais; and it was from one of its beautifully wrought iron balconies—now gone—that the queen and the chosen members of her court witnessed the magnificent procession which met and escorted the pretty girlish Maria Theresa, the bride of her famous son, Louis XIV, through the streets of Paris on August 26, 1660, an epoch before the "divine right" of kings had been called into question. But the times changed. The country was poverty stricken, the court revelling in luxury; hundreds of thousands of crowns were wasted on the caprice of a wanton favourite. The peasant, if let alone, would never have been able to plan and execute what followed. But there were philosophers, turbulent spirits, who worked secretly, stirring the smouldering fires of discontent till at last a blaze burst forth which consumed life, honour, wealth, everything, leaving the nation a seething mass of *débris*. There is no doubt that the effects which crowned the efforts of the promoters of the Revolution far exceeded what had been first intended. Let us charitably hope so, for surely no one in human guise could plan such a debauch of inhuman, devilish actions as filled the next few years. Like the familiar fable of the genie who was released from the bottle, and would not return, much to the consternation of his liberator, the masses, loosed from the thrall of years, re-

fused to be again controlled and wildly rushed on—to what?

At the period of Lafayette's treacherous imprisonment, the Revolution had not reached that pinnacle of frenzy which followed later. The letter from M. Roland, according permission to Mme. de Lafayette to reside at Chavinac, on the responsibility of the Administration, arrived about this time. Having been offended at some of the expressions in her letter, the one he wrote was full of insults to Lafayette and rudeness to his wife. He concluded somewhat childishly, quoting from her letter to M. Brissot, " ' That to consent to owe him a service,' came from the antiquated pride of what was called nobility." This clever document, being read to the " Département," called forth thunders of applause, particularly the last sentence, which was reread three times amid the wildest uproar and approbation.

Thus came the no longer desired permission to remain at Chavinac on *parole*, at the moment when it was of the most vital importance that she should be free to go as her interests directed. Being a just and honourable, as well as a most conscientious woman, she could not refuse to fulfil a suggestion, a promise which had been made of her own free will. She could not leave France; there was no way of escape. Still, " Hope springs eternal," but it was a frightful thought, that consequent upon her own wish she must deprive herself of all hope of being able to join her husband and at times the feeling that she was practically powerless to help him nearly crushed her.

The " Département " proposing to the municipality of Aurat, in which was Chavinac, to take care of the distinguished prisoners on its own responsibility, the meaning of the word was not clearly understood by one of the *municipeaux*, he inquired whether she would take the engagement to remain at Chavinac. " For in that case I would answer for her on my own respon-

sibility, for she is a worthy woman," he added with well-meant kindness and rural pomposity. It was, however, decided by the "Département" that the Commune should supply six men every day to guard Mme. de Lafayette, who, on hearing of this resolution, went immediately to the committee room.

"I here declare, gentlemen," she said, "that I will not give the *parole* I offered if guards are to be placed at my door; choose between these two securities. I cannot be offended by your not trusting me, for my husband has given still better proofs of his patriotism than I have of my honesty; but you will not allow me to believe in my own integrity and not add bayonets to my *parole*!"

How the heart of this intrepid woman throbbed as she addressed that Assembly, her hope trembling in the balance, waiting in breath-stilling anxiety, for, on the next words, hung her destiny. If her *parole* was not accepted, it meant a wild chance for liberty and love . . . she would be free to escape if she could . . . alas! despair again tipped the balance which hope had swung into the clouds but a second before. It was decided that she should not be under guard, and every week her presence at Chavinac would be reported to the municipality. Before leaving Le Puy, she wrote again to M. Brissot, though the only reply she had received to her last letter had been the insulting epistle of M. Roland. Brissot was at this time beginning to withdraw from the extreme Terrorist party, and the weight of her *parole* bore so heavily on her spirits that she was willing to overlook much for the sake of gaining that which she wished for so ardently.

Le Puy, October 4, 1792, day previous to my departure for Chavinac.

"I ought not, Sir, to write to you, considering the use you made of my letters. But the feelings of revolt which have sprung up in my heart at my unjust cap-

tivity, at the hard necessity of applying to the enemies of the object of my affections, and at the hackneyed calumnies addressed to me by M. Roland, are surpassed, since yesterday's news, by my deep affliction and alarm on hearing of the captivity even still more terrible than mine, of one who, still more than I do, deserves to be free. Do not any longer expect to find bitterness in my expressions nor even in the pride of oppressed innocence. I plead my cause with the sole desire of gaining it. I have already written to M. Roland by the last courier. I had just read in your gazette, the only one that contains any news of my husband, that he had been separated from MM. de Maubourg and de Pusy, and that he had been transferred to Spandau. His misfortunes, the risk his health is running, what I have to fear, what I have to learn, all these sufferings are too heavy for me to bear while I am separated from him, and when I reflect how utterly useless to my country are all these tortures of my heart, I do not believe anybody can persist in binding me by an engagement too lightly taken, but which is the price put upon the alleviation of my captivity. Truly, Sir, it is attaching far too much importance to my person and too little to the prolongation of an act of injustice, thus to protect my confinement.

" After all your interest has obtained for me, after your courageous conduct in withstanding a bloody faction, I do not believe that you cannot and will not obtain from the Committee a cancellation of its decree. That decision was taken at a moment when it was feared that M. de Lafayette's opinions might encourage citizens in their fidelity to the Constitution. I feel certain that M. Roland's order, which is entirely founded on that decision, should also be revoked, and that complete freedom should be restored to me. It is impossible that a certificate of residence in the prisons of the enemy for devotion to the cause of Liberty, should not be worth, for M. de Lafayette's wife, the

advantages an artistic wife would find in a certificate testifying that her husband was travelling to instruct himself in his art. I shall not speak of the barbarity of keeping wives as hostages, but I shall say that it is now completely impossible for my husband to harm or serve any cause. Allow me to repeat that it was only when reduced to the last extremity that he gave up serving the cause of liberty.

"I confess, Sir, that I shall never believe that he who has so long sought to obtain the abolition of slavery, can refuse to employ his eloquence in delivering from slavery a woman who asks for no other liberty than that of locking herself within the walls, or at least near the walls, of the citadel of Spandau. M. Roland is good enough to assure me that he is persuaded *I could not or would not do any harm.* Then I must be set free; for according to the principles professed by M. Roland himself, *good must be done to all with the least possible harm for each.* And what harm would my freedom do? Let foreign enemies alone gratify their hatred against a sincere friend of liberty. Do not join with them in persecuting him in those most dear to his heart; let them see that in our country are to be found courageous representatives of the people who abhor useless crimes and defend innocence, at least when it is weak and suffering.

"I hope soon to receive an answer to this letter. You can see by my words how utterly miserable I am, but no expression can describe the distracted state I am in, nor the gratitude I should feel towards my liberators, however great the sufferings they have hitherto made me endure.

"Noailles-Lafayette."

Though she had a great and long-standing aversion to M. Roland, she was pleased at the stand he had taken in the dreadful September massacres; and having heard that he expressed disapprobation at the crimes

committed, made up her mind to set self aside and write to him, as her friends all told her he was the one who could do the most to help her in her present trouble. It was with the greatest reluctance that she finally consented to address him:

"SIR: I can only attribute to a kind feeling the change you have brought about in my situation. You have spared me the dangers of a too perilous journey, and consented that my place of retirement should be my prison. But any prison whatsoever has become insupportable to me since I learnt that my husband had been transferred from town to town by the enemies of France, who were conducting them to Spandau. However repugnant to my feelings it may be to owe anything to men who have shown themselves the enemies and the accusers of him whom I revere and love as I ought to do, it is in all the frankness of my heart that I vow eternal gratitude to whosoever would enable me to join my husband, by taking all the responsibility from the 'Administration,' and by giving me back my *parole,* if, in the event of France becoming more free, it were possible without danger.

"It is on my knees, if necessary, that I implore this favour; imagine by that the state I am in.

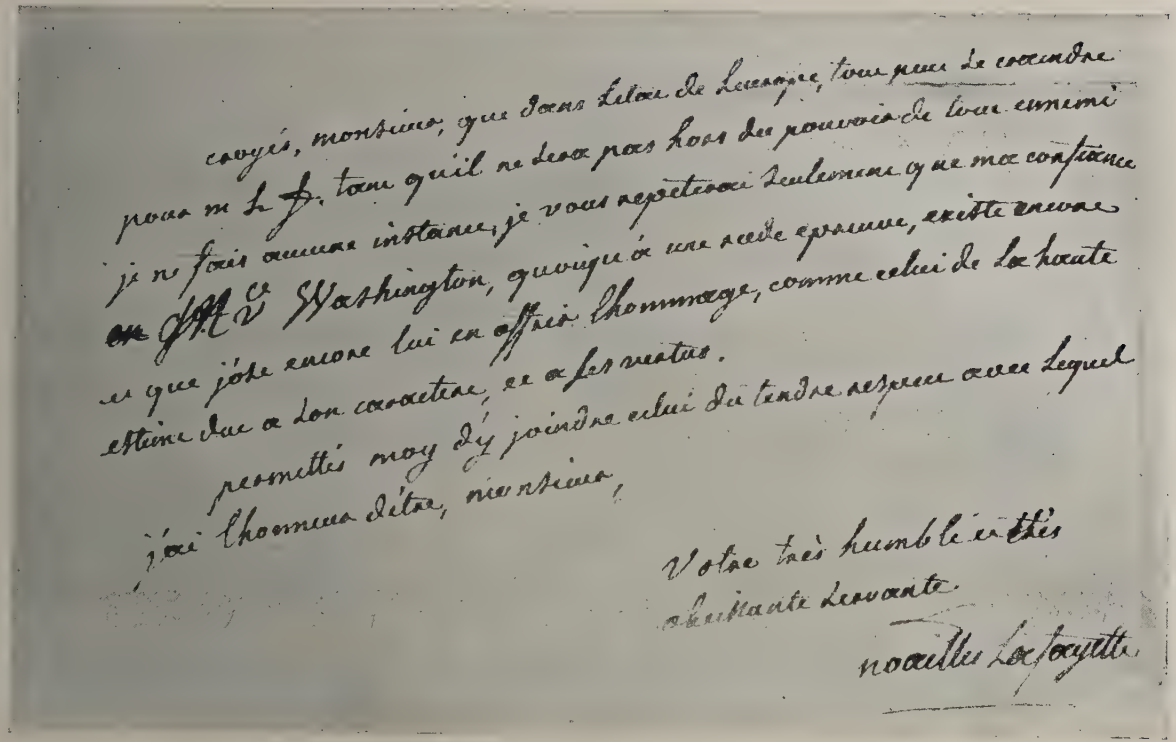
"NOAILLES-LAFAYETTE."

On returning the following day to Chavinac, accompanied by the faithful aunt, her daughters, and the servants who had attended them, the administrators were surprised and somewhat touched to observe with what deep and sincere respect the ladies were treated by the country people. They were welcomed on their arrival by the municipality.

"M. Roland believes that it is owing to aristocratic prejudices that I am unwilling to owe him his good offices," Mme. de Lafayette said, addressing them. "Yet I feel great pleasure and consider myself much

honoured by being under the protection of the commune of Aurat; because I have for them the greatest esteem."

As soon as the administration of Le Puy had gone home, the municipeaux were handsomely entertained at supper, being joined by their hostess, who drank with them the health of her husband amid much good will and fellowship. In the dead of night she received a visit from M. Frestel, who brought the welcome news that George was well and happy in his retreat. They consulted long and earnestly as to the best way of rendering service to M. de Lafayette, and it was this reason—that he might be of some use to his father—that made them hesitate about sending the boy out of France. She soon made her decision, and, time being precious, denied herself the joy of seeing him, even to say farewell, deciding that he should depart immediately with his tutor. M. Frestel was to procure a tradesman's license, and in this character a passport to go to the fair at Bordeaux. If all went well the travellers planned to cross to England, London probably being their destination, where they were to see the American minister, Mr. Pinkney, and discuss with him the best means of serving the prisoner. Tireless and unwearying, she wrote to each and every one from whom she could expect the slightest favourable intercession. Knowing the affectionate regard in which her husband always held General Washington, he was one of the first to whom she naturally turned for aid. In those dark days, when liberty and the cause of the American patriots, into which young Lafayette entered heart and soul, struggled against overwhelming odds, the impulsive Frenchman had sternly denied his longings to return to his young wife and those "whom he loved as no other man ever loved his friends," to stay with that quiet, self-contained leader of the ragged forces. To Lafayette, Washington was more than a man—a friend—he was the embodied spirit of repub-



croyés, monsieur, que dans l'état de l'europe, tout peut le craindre
pour m. le f. tant qu'il ne sera pas hors du pouvoir de tout ennemi
je ne fais aucune instance, je vous repeterai seulement que ma confiance
en M. de Washington, quoique à une rude epreuve, existe encore
et que j'ose encore lui en offrir l'hommage, comme celui de la haute
estime due a son caractere, et a ses vertus.
permettés moy d'y joindre celui du tendre respect avec lequel
j'ai l'honneur d'être, monsieur,

Votre très humble et très
obeissante servante

noailles Lafayette

FAC-SIMILE OF LETTER WRITTEN BY MME. DE LAFAYETTE TO GEORGE WASHINGTON

From the original in the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

licanism, that principle which had led the prisoner of Olmütz into all the misfortunes of his exciting life—now at their culmination. From one who had ever professed such friendship for her husband, Mme. de Lafayette naturally expected some aid. She could not fathom the silence which followed. So strictly was the family of the absent patriot watched and guarded that thanks only to the kindness of John Dyson was she able to get the letter out of France in safety, when it was forwarded from Lowestoff in Suffolk, finally reaching its destination.

Poor, appealing letter, with its curious, tiny handwriting, spelling of the *ancien régime*; its square, stained, and yellowed paper, on which all the lines have a decided upward slant, and, on the back the neat endorsement in Washington's hand, "From the Marchioness de Lafayette," and the date of its receipt; what hopes and fears agitated the heart and tormented the brain of her who wrote you! It exists to-day, a relic of one of those "dead women asleep," whose nobility and faithfulness to the man she loved will cause the name of Adrienne de Lafayette to be remembered as an undying model of wifely devotion. In the letter which John Dyson wrote to Washington, he feelingly alludes to the Lafayettes in the following words:

GUNTON, NEAR LOWESTOFT IN SUFFOLK,
December 8, 1792.

"SIR: I am just arrived in England from the family of Mons. Lafayette, where I have constantly resided for the last twelve months. The following letter was delivered me by Mme. Lafayette with a view of its being copied and sent you by the first opportunity. Her present situation is truly affecting, separated from her husband without the means of hearing from him, herself in captivity under the safe guard of the Municipality, she is anxiously awaiting the decision of his and her own destiny. Under these circumstances she

relies on your influence to adopt such means as may effectuate their mutual freedom.

"I am, Sir, your most obedient servant, etc.,

"JOHN DYSON."

"I have written and shall send two copies of Mme. Lafayette's letter, lest by some accident one of them should miscarry."

With her heart in her words, appealing for the liberty of her husband, Adrienne writes:

"CHAVINAC PRÈS BRIOUDE, DÉPARTEMENT DE LA HAUTE-LOIRE,

"October 8, 1792.

"SIR: Without doubt you have heard of our misfortunes. You know that your disciple, your friend, has not ceased to act in a manner worthy of you and of Liberty. You know that his unalterable attachment to the Constitution which he swore to maintain, drew upon him the hatred of a powerful faction which wished to destroy it; that, proscribed by this faction and accused at the head of his Army, he, wishing to avoid adding a new crime to his citizens, withdrew himself from the sanguinary fury which pursued the courageous friends of Liberty, and was already on his way to a neutral country, from whence he intended to go among you and offer up his wishes that his ungrateful country might find defenders who would serve it *with as much zeal, disinterestedness, and love of liberty as he himself.*

"His wish was that I should go with all our family to join him in England, that we might go and establish ourselves together in America, and there enjoy the consoling sights of virtue worthy of liberty, but before he arrived at his desired point, and even before he reached a neutral country, it was necessary for him to cross a small corner of the enemy's territory. There he was met and taken prisoner on the 23d of August. He is

yet in their hands. He was at first carried to Namur, then to Nivelle, from thence to Luxembourg, from thence I learnt by the public papers that on the 6th Sept. they carried him to Wesel, a city of Westphalia under the dominion of the King of Austria, and that there they separated him from those members of the Constituent Assembly who had been partakers of his lot, and carried him alone to the Citadel of Spandau, between Berlin and Potsdam. The motives, the designs of such strange and cruel conduct on the part of his enemies are too deep for me to fathom. They have not permitted him to write me a line. He was taken by the troops of the Emperor, altho' it is the King of Prussia who retains him a prisoner in his dominions. And still he suffers the inconceivable persecution from all his enemies without—the faction which reigns within keeps me a hostage at 120 leagues from the Capital —judge then at what distance I am from him. In this abyss of grief, the idea of owing to the United States and to M. Washington the life and liberty of M. de Lafayette, reanimates my heart with some hope. I hope everything from the goodness of a people with whom he has set an example of that liberty of which he is now the victim—and shall I speak what I hope? I would ask of them, through you, an envoy who shall go to reclaim him in the name of the Republic of the United States, wheresoever he may be retained, and who may make, in their name, with whosoever power he may be, the necessary arrangements to emancipate him from his captivity and carry him to their bosoms. If his wife and his children could be comprised in this happy mission, it is easy to judge how sweet it would be to her and to them, but if this would retard or embarrass in any degree its progress or success, we will defer yet longer the happiness of a reunion, and, when he shall be near you, we will bear the grief of separation with more courage.

"May heaven deign to bless the confidence with

which it has inspired me. I hope my request is not rash. Accept the homage of the sentiments that have dictated this letter to me, as well as that of attachment and tender respect with which I am,

"Your very humble and obedient servant,

"NOAILLES-LAFAYETTE."

In her unhappy situation, under the strict surveillance of enemies, uncertain as to the fate of her husband, reduced almost to absolute poverty, Mme. de Lafayette anxiously awaited a reply.

In feverish expectancy passed the months at Chavinac. The everyday life went on, as to routine, but the harrowing anxiety which weighed down the spirit of Adrienne could not but be felt by the household, try as she might to spare others much of the great burden of sorrow under which she laboured. Despite these terrible trials, the unselfish woman never failed in her duties toward her children, managing to spend part of every day in their society, and to give her attention to their much-interrupted education. This time was usually passed in reading aloud to the two girls, and in after life Virginie speaks with the deepest pleasure of these hours spent in the old garden, or, on wet or stormy days, in a corner of the great hall, where the hours sped all too swiftly, listening to the gentle voice of the devoted reader. Always unselfish, she urged the children to amuse themselves, even joining in their simple games, not wishing that their youth should be too deeply shadowed by the great sorrows and fearful events of which tidings came daily. Autumn passed, then the dreary days of winter dragged their length; spring once more seemed to augur that perhaps the worst was over, but still there was no answer to her appeal, and, believing that her letter must have miscarried, for, poor woman! had not this been the fate of those she wrote in her girlish days to her young husband, she wrote again on March 13, 1793, on receiv-

ing the news that Washington had a second time been elected to the Presidency of the United States, on whose good will she built so many hopes. She begins by congratulating him on this event, saying that:

"The gazettes have announced to me that you have a second time been chosen President of the United States, and this good news a little revives my courage, which the silence of your nation put to a new and severe test." Mme. de Lafayette then alludes to the inexplicable fact that she has heard absolutely nothing of any attempt to aid her husband, nor of any demonstrations on the part of his American friends.

"I had the honour to write to you, Monsieur, on the 8th October, 1792, when I was myself detained a captive in France by order of the Committee which governed the faction, who after commanding me to Paris about the time of the massacres, granted, nevertheless, to the administration of the Département where I dwelt, permission to guard me themselves under the responsibility of the Municipality of my village," she continues. "It was from thence I had the consolation of writing to you; I dared not sign my letter, nor even write it with my own hand. A young loyalist farmer" (M. Dyson), "who had passed some time with us in our retreat, took charge of it to address a copy of it to you and to certify it. Has this letter reached you? Was it necessary to excite your interest? I cannot believe it. But I confess to you, Monsieur, that your abandonment of M. de Lafayette in all these evils, and your silence during the last six months is inexplicable to me. I hope it will not continue forever, and if I am ever to see his face again, to be reunited to him, the hope of accomplishing it still rests upon your goodness and that of the states he helped to found."

She concludes the letter by speaking of the new laws forbidding emigration, and those already in force concerning confiscation, explaining the reasons which prevent her leaving France, and some details relating to

her personal property, and the estate of her husband and children. The heavy losses which her family, in common with that of other nobles had suffered, grieved her little, for she was a woman to whom wealth was not a fetish, and counted as the least of her misfortunes. Her sole anxiety was to better the condition of her husband and his companions. "But I can do nothing for him," she concludes. "I can neither receive a line from, nor convey one to him, such is the manner in which I am treated; but I shall take no step unworthy of him whom I love, nor of the cause of liberty, to which he would have been faithful. . . . I shall add no more, at present, but I repeat my confidence in M. Washington, on whom my whole hope is founded."

While we know now that Washington had replied on March 16th to the first letter of appeal from the wife of his devoted comrade-in-arms, it is very evident that the unfortunate lady never received the calm, non-committal document which, while expressing the kindest sentiments, pledged the writer to nothing. He also wrote previously, placing to her credit 200 guineas at a bank in Amsterdam; but in the condition of France at the moment, she probably never received the money, or she would, without doubt, have thanked the donor.

In the matter of his conduct in this instance toward the Lafayette family, Washington does not appear in the best light. Admitting he did not want to embroil the United States with the powers of Europe, it is not likely that an official intimation to the effect that he wished to bring about the release of his friend would have turned Europe topsy-turvy. Washington was a man highly esteemed and respected by the sovereigns and statesmen of his day, but it is making too much of the point to think that, had he shared in the universal sentiment of his fellow-citizens in their wish to effect the freedom of the man who had done so much for their country, Europe would have been convulsed. In the year 1792–93 the United States of America did

not represent what that nation stands for to-day. The country was poor, drained by the wars, torn by factions; there was an infant navy, and the army, what there was of it, was not in a condition to awe or appall those who kept Lafayette prisoner. George Washington could gracefully, and without fear of any dire result, have asked, demanded, the release of Lafayette, and, had the demand been replied to negatively, there would have been no upheaval of diplomatic relations, no declaration of war. In summing up the conduct of Washington in this matter, one is forced to believe that, like many men who have "achieved" or had greatness "thrust upon them," the "Father of his Country" had arrived at that pitch of sublime importance where he considered every act of his to mean as much to the world at large as it did to those surrounding him.

To Mme. de Lafayette he wrote, on June 13, 1793:

"MADAME: While I acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th March, I can with the greatest truth assure you that I feel as sincere sympathy in your afflictions on account of M. de la Lafayette, and to shew you that I have not been unmindful of your condition, and how earnestly I have been disposed to alleviate your sufferings, as far as it is in my power, I enclose you duplicates of two letters which I had the honour of writing to you on the 31st of January & 16th of March. To those I can only add my most ardent prayers that you may again be united to M. de la Fayette, under circumstances that may be joyful to you both; & that the evening of that life whose morning has been devoted to the cause of liberty and humanity, may be crowned with the best of heaven's blessings.

"With sentiments of sincere attachment to yourself and your dear offspring,

"I am, &c.,

(signed) "GO. WASHINGTON."

This note was enclosed in a letter to Gouverneur Morris, the American minister, then living at Paris, in which Washington directs him to forward the enclosed packet, "For Mme. de Lafayette, which contains duplicates of letters which I have written in answer to hers, & which I will thank you to convey to her by as safe an opportunity as can be met with, and even if that opportunity should be a late one, it would be better than to trust it to uncertain conveyance." So it would seem as if the President was not in the habit of sending his letters under cover of the American minister, which was about the only way to convey missives in safety at that instant. Doubtless this accounts for the non-arrival of the former letters sent to Mme. de Lafayette.

When all the correspondence relating to the matter is impartially weighed, it shows but too plainly that Washington's conduct was ultra-conservative. Though he made some feeble unofficial efforts in behalf of Lafayette, not a word in any of his letters shows that he took a single step toward effecting the freedom of the prisoner at Chavinac. He made no appeal, official or otherwise, to the French Government in behalf of Mme. de Lafayette. He placed 200 guineas to her credit—money which her husband had advanced during the Revolution—and let the matter rest at that. No very friendly tribute to the wife of America's great friend! and that when the whole American nation, aroused by the sufferings of Lafayette, stirred by the feeble and ineffective efforts of their Government, loudly demanded some definite action!

. . . . .

The letters sent to M. Roland had been carried by one M. Beauchet, a very worthy man, a *commis à la liquidation*, the husband of one of Mme. de Lafayette's "women," who, besides holding that position, was a dear trusted friend and confidant. The letter which he brought from M. Roland was as follows:

"I have put, Madame," he wrote, "your touching request under the eyes of the Committee. I must, nevertheless, observe that it would seem to me imprudent for a person bearing your name to travel through France, on account of the unpleasant impression which is at the present moment attached to it. But circumstances may alter. I advise you to wait, and shall be the first to seize a favourable opportunity."

The messenger said that M. Roland had seemed moved by the letter sent to him, and he had been received politely, and with reserve by M. Brissot, who, though guarded in his expressions, had "wished that it might become possible to leave the *Citoyenne Lafayette à l'industrie du sentiment qui l'animait.*" Cheered by this passing hope, she at once answered M. Roland's letter:

"I return thanks, Sir, for the ray of hope with which you have brightened my heart so long unaccustomed to that feeling. Nothing can add to what I owe to my *parole* and to the Administrateurs who rely upon it. No degree of misfortune could ever make me think of breaking my word, but your letter renders that duty a little more supportable, and I already begin to feel something of that gratitude I promised you if, delivered through your hands, I were restored to the object of my affections and to the happiness of offering him some consolation.

"NOAILLES-LAFAYETTE."

The whereabouts of Lafayette, at this time, were very difficult to ascertain. At the advice of M. Beauchet she wrote to the Duke of Brunswick, entreating the General of the Allied Armies of the Coalition to send her some information as to the destination of her husband. This unsealed letter was sent in a note to the Minister of War, M. Servan, the following being a copy:

"SIR: I have not the honour of being known to you, nor have I that of being sufficiently acquainted with you to be aware of what right innocence and misfortune have in your eyes. It is now three months since I have heard anything of my husband, who is a prisoner of the enemies of France. It is not my intention at present to set forth his rights to the interest and esteem of his fellow-citizens. How could a woman's tears gain that which the whole life of the most incorruptible upholder of liberty has not succeeded in obtaining? But I claim my personal rights to your compassion, and I implore you to kindly send this unsealed note to the Generalissimo of the allied armies.

"The importance I attach to your doing me this good office ensures my gratitude.

"NOAILLES-LAFAYETTE."

The letter never received an answer, and if it ever reached the Duke of Brunswick is a matter of conjecture. Shortly after this she was advised by M. Beauchet, who had been instrumental in sending the last letter, to write to the King of Prussia, asking him to release her husband. She received the draft of a letter, suitable for the purpose, from Mr. Morris, the American minister, but finding its wording too humble and self-abasing, refused to copy and sign it. This letter, being found in Mr. Morris's papers after his death, has always—erroneously—been ascribed to Mme. de Lafayette.

PARIS, November 7, 1792.

"MY DEAR MADAME: I need not tell you why the enclosed paper is transmitted to you. I know not the titles of the King of Prussia, these should be properly placed, you know, because monarchs are very sensitive on that subject. If reports speak true, His Majesty is more likely to listen to a woman than to a man, and this is favourable; but what would be still more advan-

tageous, would be to have your letter presented by the favourite of the day. I am told that Mme. de Guiche has lately received his admirations. If you were to plead your cause in a court of Justice, it might be well to insist on the rights of our unfortunate friend, but as the person to whom you address yourself is both judge and party, the matter of right must be touched with great gentleness.

"Be of good courage, for sooner or later the present clouds will be dissipated. All human things are liable to change. You will remember I used to inculcate that maxim when things were smiling. It was then true, and it is still true. But then it was unpleasant, and now it will afford consolation. Farewell, my dear Madame. It will give me sincere pleasure to be useful to you and yours.

"GOUVERNEUR MORRIS."

Mme. de Lafayette had decided ideas of her own as to the necessary amount of humility requisite in addressing a monarch, even when the letter was one begging a favour—and a favour which was almost a matter of life and death to her. At this moment the Emperor Frederick "still pretended to possess" the quality of integrity, to which virtue the tactful pen of Adrienne did not fail to appeal, though, unfortunately, later events proved his Majesty of Prussia decidedly lacking in this and other kingly attributes.

"SIRE: Your Majesty's well-known integrity admits of M. de Lafayette's wife addressing herself to you without forgetting what she owes to her husband's character. I have always hoped, Sire, that your Majesty would respect virtue, wherever it was to be found, and thereby give Europe a glorious example. It is now five long and dreadful months since last I heard anything of M. de Lafayette, so I cannot plead his cause. But it seems to me that both his enemies and

myself speak eloquently in his favour; they by their crimes, I by the violence of my despair. They prove his virtue, and how much he is feared by the wicked; I show how worthy he is of being loved. They make it a necessity for your Majesty's glory not to have an object of persecution in common with them. Shall I be fortunate enough to give you the occasion of restoring me to life by delivering him?

Allow me, Sire, to indulge in that hope as in the one of soon owing you this debt of gratitude.

"NOAILLES-LAFAYETTE."

This letter was carried by M. Beauchet, whose comings and goings kept the isolated women in touch with the world, it being as much as life was worth to write or receive letters at this time, the danger of having them fall into the wrong hands being too strong to risk writing, unless on the most urgent affairs. M. Beauchet, on one of his visits, managed to see Mme. d'Ayen and Louise de Noailles, and to bring many messages of comfort and cheer to the prisoner at Chavinac. The most terrible punishment which could have been planned and inflicted on Adrienne de Lafayette by her enemies was this enforced deprivation of the society and companionship of her near and dearly loved relatives; the separation almost broke her heart; added to which she never knew from one day to another what misfortune might befall them; they might, even now, have ceased to live. Almost directly after the departure of M. Beauchet with her letter to the King of Prussia, news came of the condemnation and execution of Louis XVI. These tidings produced a fearful effect on the inhabitants of the country, and the aunt, niece, children, servants, all were numbed by the terrible blow. To the superstitious peasants it seemed that the end of the world must come when the sacrilegious hand of the executioner touched the person of the Lord's anointed. To those less superstitious, but more far seeing, it brought

home with unbearable clearness the thought of what might come next! They hoped, they prayed; with each dawn their hearts beat heavily at the fear that ere night would come the awful tidings of the sacrifice of some one dearly loved. Hoof beats sounding along the road would drive the blood from cheeks which personal fear had never blanched. They lived upon the brink of a frightful crater; there was nothing left but to wait, to hope and pray.

CHAPTER XIV

THANKS to the efforts of M. Roland, Mme. de Lafayette's liberty was conditionally restored to her about the middle of September, 1792. Though free nominally, she was, with all the *ci-devant* nobles, under a close surveillance, not being permitted to leave the " Département " without first obtaining permission from those in authority. Being no longer on *parole*, she felt in a measure more free, and, making the best of things, hoped for her unrestricted liberty ere long.

Chief of her many anxieties at this time was the desire to get her son safely out of the country. Owing to a letter from his tutor, written at Bordeaux some time previously, she believed that he with his charge had succeeded in embarking safely for England, as had been arranged, and that they were at this time beyond harm's way. This, unfortunately, was not the case. At the last moment, when all their plans were perfected, so many obstacles intervened that M. Frestel had given up in despair, and, taking George with him, gone to some relatives in Normandy, there to await a more favourable opportunity by which he might accomplish the original purpose.

To the many sorrows of the devoted mother, whose heart ached at the thought of her boy being sent so far across the seas, was added the pitiful sight of the uncontrollable grief displayed by her aunt, who had managed to become acquainted with the design of sending her grandnephew to America: a plan which it had been the intention of Mme. de Lafayette to leave the old

lady uninformed of, as her age and the precarious condition of her health made it imperative she should be spared all undue excitement and worry. The poor old lady mourned the child as one already dead, and the subject became so intensely painful to her and to the boy's mother that by tacit consent it was omitted from the daily conversation.

Financial affairs also kept Mme. de Lafayette in the country, as she wished to settle some small claims with the creditors of her husband; debts for which, practically, the creditors had no written claim or bond. Lafayette's property had been united with that of his aunt, and as soon as the faithful wife was free to come and go, she took these matters in hand, proceeding immediately to the " Département," where she made a declaration of her husband's rights upon her arrival. Having possessed, at the time of her marriage, a fortune of 200,000 livres—her personal property—she arranged that the interest of what was owed to her should be taken from her husband's estate. She was unable, however, to persuade the Administration to act in obedience to the law, which, still in force, left them the power to pay debts with sequestered property. On each and every one of her appearances before the " Département," Adrienne invariably began by protesting against the injustice of having applied to her husband the law concerning *émigrés*, as he had not left France voluntarily, but was sent away as a prisoner, detained against his will in defiance of all laws of right or justice by the enemies of his country in a foreign state. Her lawyer, M. Marthory, would then explain and discuss the matter technically. A great sudden joy, the unexpected return of her son at this moment, afforded her more happiness than she had experienced for many weary months. The mother could not nerve herself for another parting—not just then. George was accompanied by M. Frestel, who declared himself ready, eager, and willing to undertake a second attempt, as

soon as Mme. de Lafayette might desire. He explained to her the numerous obstacles, petty annoyances, and adventures which had been theirs on that eventful journey to Bordeaux, and had at last prevented their departure from France.

Placing, as she did, an utter trust and confidence in the young man, Mme. de Lafayette accepted his respectfully expressed opinion that, at the present moment, it would not be wise or judicious to attempt another escape from the country. Though they had, in this instance, come through many dangers unscathed, luck might not favour them a second time, and the enemies of Lafayette were so numerous that the boy ran far more peril than the son of an ordinary *ci-devant* noble would have done. The all-powerful Jacobins had their spies, hosts of them in all parts of France, and would not fail to be informed of the fact if George left Chavinac. He was but a child, and, at the moment, ran no particular risk; if anything unexpected happened, there were places in the neighbourhood where he could lie for days concealed. Eager to be convinced, Mme. de Lafayette finally, after deep thought, agreed in the opinion of her adviser. For the present George was to remain at Chavinac, greatly to the joy of his aunt, who, old though she was, retained spirit enough to turn out, sword in hand, and fight those who came to molest the apple of her eye—the heir of the Lafayettes!

The faithful wife was ever on the *qui vive* to do anything, even the smallest trifle, which might be of service to M. de Lafayette and the other prisoners. About this time she saw one or two letters written by the celebrated Klopstock in a newspaper, the trend of which was so favourable to her husband that she at once wrote to the author, sending the letter privately by some Italian plasterers who were returning home. She sent, at the same time, a letter to the Princess of Orange, written at the suggestion of Mr. Morris. This

she did most reluctantly, because of the connection of her husband, in 1787, with the Dutch patriots. Sympathy comes from the most unexpected places, and the princess replied kindly, politely, and without promising anything, encouraged and reanimated her hopes. She wrote also to M. Lucchesni, but received no reply.

At the end of March the order was given for the examination of all papers belonging to the *ci-devant* nobles. This was in consequence of the defaction of Dumouriez. Nothing objectionable to the "Département" was found at Chavinac. The *représentant*, Jean Baptiste Lacoste, personally distributing his pamphlets, in which much was said against Lafayette and the Girondists, now appeared on the scene. He was heard to say at Aurat that Mme. de Lafayette should be arrested. At Le Puy he had ordered the execution of two young men, solely because they had refused to submit to the requisition.

Mme. de Lafayette, on the advice of her friends, thought it prudent to anticipate the acts of this gentleman, and went to meet him at Brioude. He received her with politeness.

"I have heard, monsieur," she said, after the first greeting, "that it is contemplated to have all the nobles impressed on the occasion of M. Dumouriez's defaction. I declare that I have always said how gladly I should go security for M. de Lafayette. I am by no means prepared to do so for his enemies. Besides, it is equally indifferent to M. Dumouriez whether I live or die; it would be far better to leave me in my retreat. Those who last expelled me from it only excited pity in my favour, and brought back to people's minds many acts of injustice. I ask to be left with my children in the only situation which can be bearable to me so long as their father remains the captive of France's enemies."

"*Citoyenne*," answered Lacoste, "such feelings are worthy of you."

" I care little," she replied, " to know whether they are worthy of me; I only wish they should be worthy of him."

Lacoste, in a " soft insinuating voice " told her that the Government was shortly to issue a decree forbidding the *ci-devant* nobles to meet or converse in a number or group containing more than three people. This order was never issued in that " Département," though in force at Ardèche then and later.

Calamity followed calamity. The affairs of unhappy France grew daily, hourly worse, and the persecution of these miserable priests in the various départements was unequalled in ferocity and persistence. Several were killed at Le Puy and Brioude, among those seized on suspicion being the *curé* of Chavinac. Quickly was the news of this misfortune communicated to Mme. de Lafayette. Without an instant's hesitation, she sent a mounted messenger to M. Montfleury, who had more than once told her " that if ever she sent him an unfortunate person to save, she would have a right to his zeal and gratitude." In innumerable ways had this large-hearted man shown himself her friend, by the unfailing interest and courage he displayed in defending her rights before those who endeavoured to intensify the misery and anxieties of her daily life tenfold by their unwearying persecutions.

The trial of the *curé* was held before a jury of the peasants of Aurat. These bucolic individuals, whose minds were of the consistency and calibre of the turnips dear to their appetites, were dominated, unknown to themselves, by M. Guitandry, the *maire* and surgeon of the little community. The latter was a sincere friend of Mme. de Lafayette, and one of the few who had not lived beyond the remembrance of the many favours which he, and those before him, had received from the Sieurs Lafayette, the feudal lords of the manor. By his strong personality and influence over the minds of

the peasant jurymen, M. Guitandry succeeded in obtaining a verdict in favour of the *curé*, but so favourable that there was no one in Brioude courageous enough to execute it.

Well knowing the nature and spirit of the people with whom she had to deal, Mme. de Lafayette, without losing an instant, started for Brioude, where, on her arrival, she found the case taking an utterly different and most unfavourable turn. It was almost lost, having, in fact, gone so far that the friends of the *curé* had all agreed on forcing him to take the oath to the Constitution, as this seemed to be the only way to save his life. Every one was frightened, sullen, indifferent, or ill-disposed. It had been decided to refer the matter to the " Département." Knowing that should this happen her *curé* was lost, Mme. de Lafayette cleverly managed to delay the messenger. Being a woman of great resource and eloquence, she talked to those country bumpkins with such tact, energy, and affability, such forceful rhetoric, that some were intimidated, abashed, and the majority indifferent, since the trial was but one of many and had lost novelty. She won the day, and the *curé* was allowed to depart in peace. But those over whom she had gained this triumph neither forgot nor forgave the fearless woman. It was recorded against her, and in the more frightful times to follow her bold conduct in regard to this matter was one of the gravest and most damaging charges which she had to face.

While all this was taking place at Chavinac, the party of the most extreme Terrorists had gained such a following, and swept all opposition away with such ruthless vengeance, that France lay at its mercy. There was no law, no protection for life or property. From the highest to the lowest, the most famous to the humble peasant, each and every one was in fear of that fearful tribunal, to appear before which meant but one verdict—death. For the moment the party in power

effected little change in the troubled affairs of the Lafayettes, save that of causing the outlook for the future to be more gloomy and even less promising than it had been a short while ago. Things had come to a point where no human power could be of avail against the rulers of France.

At last, as summer began to dawn, and the mere appearance of the world offered some slight hope of better things, when fair days followed one after the other, soothing in their comforting monotony—a ragged peasant appeared at Chavinac. So shabby was he, so weather-stained and unprepossessing, that the few domestics remaining of a once princely household hesitated to admit him to their mistress's presence. Finally, the return of the châtelaine from some errand of mercy interrupted the discussion. She demanded his name; what he wanted. The man respectfully but insistently replied that he must see madame alone. At once the ever-present thought in her heart told her that here was news of her husband! Unheeding the protests of the servants that madame must be careful, there were so many desperate people wandering over France, she led the man to a room where they would be alone, commanding him, with more haste and abruptness than was her wont, to acquaint her with his errand.

The man, after some fumbling with the rags forming his costume, presently produced and handed to her a letter, after which, without a word, he left the château as mysteriously as he had appeared. Mme. de Lafayette needed no one to tell her from whom came the letter. All the long months of silence had reduced her to such a condition of overstrained nervousness that her trembling hands could scarcely obey the wish to open the sealed paper, soiled from its many wanderings, but the first to come to her since the news of his imprisonment had reached Chavinac.

General Lafayette to the Princess d'Henin.

MAGDEBOURG, March 15, 1793.

"I am still alive, my dear Princess, and able to tell you so, but these are the only two important facts which I am able to tell you. This letter is designed both for you and for my wife and children, of whose place of residence I am ignorant, and for those of my friends to whom you and Mme. de Lafayette shall think proper to communicate it.

"You have been informed of all that has happened to us from the time of the fatal encounter at Rochefort till given up by Austria to Prussia, we were transported to Wesel. You must have learnt some particulars respecting our captivity in that citadel. It would require a very long account to inform you of all the precautions that were devised to cut off every communication between us and the rest of the world, to retain us in our prison, to watch us closely, and to multiply our privations.

"Lameth was dying for several weeks; I suffered very much in my lungs and nerves from fever and want of sleep; our two other companions suffered also; and, as the King of Prussia had again prohibited us from taking fresh air, although the physician thought it necessary; as it has been signified to Maubourg, who was by an accident apprised of my condition, that even on the bed of death we should not see each other; and, as the Commandant was responsible with his head for his vigilance, we were glad to hear of our removal, which would reunite us for some time, and which, by enabling us to respire fresh air, would greatly contribute to re-establish our health.

"Our passage through Germany, whatever may have been the original intention, was most highly honourable to the martyrs of a glorious cause, and has not a little contributed to excite towards us a flattering interest, and ideas very different from those which were

anticipated. The observations that were made respecting the last sixteen years of my life, the state of things on this side of the Rhine, and the four captives, did not appear to me during our journey to indicate anything that could alarm me.

"And now I will present you with a description of my prison and my manner of life.

"Represent to yourself an opening made in the rampart of the Citadel, and encompassed with a high and strong palisade. It is by that passage, by entering successively through four gates, each one of which is armed with chains, locks, and bars of iron, you may reach, not without difficulty and noise, my cell. This cell is three paces broad and five and a half long, containing no other ornament than two French verses which rhyme with the words to suffer and to die (*souffrir et mourir*). The wall next to the ditch is dripping with moisture, and that opposite permits the light of day, but not the rays of the sun, to enter through a small but closely grated window. Imagine also, two sentinels whose eyes constantly penetrate my subterranean abode, but from beyond the palisades in order to prevent our speaking to one another, spies are set over us distinct from the guard; and in addition to this the walls, the ramparts, the ditches, and the guards within and without the citadel of Magdebourg, and you will see, my dear Princess, that the foreign powers neglect nothing to keep me in their dominions.

"The clanking of my four doors is renewed each morning, when they are opened to admit my domestic; again at dinner, when I eat in presence of the Commandant of the citadel, and of the guard; and lastly at night, to remand my servant to his prison; after which, having made fast all the locks, the Commandant carries with him the keys into the *apartement* where, since my arrival, the King has ordered him to sleep.

"Books are furnished me from which all the white leaves have been torn out, but I have no news, no ga-

zettes, no communication, neither ink, nor pen, nor pencil; and it is by a miracle I possess this sheet, on which I write to you with a tooth pick.

"My health declines; my physical has almost as much need of liberty as my moral constitution. The small quantity of air which reaches me in this subterranean cell affords little relief to my lungs; I am often afflicted with fever; I have no exercise and little sleep; yet I make no complaint, knowing by experience how useless it would be. But I am tenacious of my life and my friends may be assured of the active concurrence of all sentiments which lead me to value the preservation of my existence, although, considering my situation and the progress of my suffering, I cannot much longer answer for their efficacy. Perhaps it is better to preserve them in this manner, than to surprise them hereafter with the worst.

"The accounts I have given you will serve also for my three companions, whose situation is similar. I doubt if Lameth will long hold out; he was dying at Wesel, and is but little better here. M. de Pusy suffers much, though he is less ill. The same may be said of Maubourg, whose cell is situated on the same subterranean corridor with mine, and, as in order to prevent me suffocating at once, they open the two inmost of my four gates a few hours before dinner, I am sometimes able, on the unbarring of his doors, and in the presence of the Commandant, to observe with much pain that his appearance is greatly changed. Whatever care they may have taken to tantalise us by the deprivation of news, we have at length obtained news of the success of the French Armies, the mismanagement of public affairs, the assassination of the King, in which all laws of humanity, of justice, and of national compact have been trampled underfoot, and the abominable murder of my virtuous friend, La Rochefoucauld; but all information respecting my wife and children, and my other friends, has been so completely intercepted,

with the exception of a few words from Damas at the time of our singular meeting at Ham, that I am in the most painful state of anxiety as to the state of all that is most dear to me. If it were true, as they take pains to tell me, but which I cannot believe, that all who do not abjure the principles of the Declaration of Rights must leave England, my family cannot live there.

"Ten thousand florins have been deposited here on the part of the United States, which sum will prevent me, when my money is exhausted, from living on bread and water; but though my American friends are more occupied concerning my liberty than my sustenance, I have not heard anything further. I know that the Prince of Coburg has a great success against the dispersed detachments of Dumouriez, yet, in the midst of the strifes of anarchy, and of so many hostile attacks, liberty, in spite of all her enemies, will not perish.

"This letter will reach you by way of Hamburg, but I know not through what channel. If any American should be there, it will be forwarded through him. I beg you to pay whatever is necessary, and to send letters in return. As I am ignorant what precautions will be taken, and only request you to avoid the post offices, both in England and elsewhere, it will remain with the bearers, with you, and the friends to whom Lameth may write, to arrange this matter. But you will conceive with what anxiety I wait for letters from my family and from you. I recommend, however, an inviolable discretion on which depends the fortune and life of any person who, being under the rule of these governments, shall have rendered us any service; and the fear of compromising them makes me weigh every word with circumspection, from which I flatter myself you will not infer any diminution of my fortitude.

"You will easily conceive how ardently we sigh for our resurrection from this tomb. It was neither just nor politic to arrest us, nor is it just or politic to retain us. This we have once represented; our friends may

often directly or indirectly repeat it. This slow death is dreadful to us, and, without enquiring to whom it can give joy, I should be extremely glad if you could extricate us from it. Communicate to the family of Pusy and of Maubourg, who are in France, this intelligence concerning my two companions. Send us information of them, and in London see the friends of Lameth. They have each a servant, and I have two; one of whom, Félix, has been put into a separate cell, and the other, a native of Chavinac, waits on me. We wish their families to know that they are not dead.

"If you know my Aunt, judge how anxious I am concerning her health. I embrace my wife and my children. Adieu, my dear Princess, a thousand kindnesses to my friends; you know mine for you.

"LAFAYETTE."

"P. S. I know not what disposition has been made of my plantation at Cayenne, but I hope that Mme. de Lafayette will take care that the negroes who cultivate it shall preserve their liberty."

Eager as Mme. de Lafayette had always been to join him and share the discomforts of his prison before the arrival of this letter, the desire to do so increased tenfold, and at times she felt that she could endure the separation no longer. Her wish to pay a few small debts, and a great reluctance to leave Mme. de Chavinac, made her hesitate. At that time the receipt of any sort of income had ceased. Everything was, of necessity, conducted with the strictest economy, and the household expenses reduced to a minimum. Hoping to be able to arrange her affairs, she wrote to Gouverneur Morris, offering to transfer to him everything of which she was possessed if he would undertake the settlement of these matters—the payment of some trifling debts and her aunt's safety. In the "noblest and most generous manner" came the answer, offering to fur-

nish her with whatever sums she might consider necessary, adding with delicacy, "that he ran no risk in doing so, for, if circumstances caused him to lose what he had advanced, he knew that the Americans would hold themselves responsible."

These details being satisfactorily arranged, Mme. de Lafayette felt once more at ease—that is, as much as she could be in the dangerous and difficult position she occupied. Her gratitude may be measured by the fact that all they had to depend on was the money lent by Morris—incomes having vanished with the Divine Right of Kings. Another proof of this noble woman's intrepid and unselfish nature is shown in the following instance. At this period, in consequence of the fearful upheaval and the risk they incurred, the wives of many of the *émigrés* thought it proper to obtain divorces, being able in this way to save their children's fortunes, and often to ensure greater safety to themselves. Though Mme. de Lafayette liked and esteemed many of the persons who took this course of action, the inherent spirit of religion she possessed, as well as her conscience, would not have allowed her to take such a step, even had her life depended on so doing. It was diametrically at variance with her idea of Christian law, though merely a matter of form, and served to deceive no one. Ever was the great love, the pride, she felt for her husband, which made her glory and take pleasure in being connected in any way with him and the cause which he so warmly championed. Though the pretended divorce brought safety to many a good and truly loving wife, to many a pious mother, there was not a petition presented to the Administration by Adrienne de Lafayette, not a paper which this intrepid woman did not begin with the daring words:

"La femme Lafayette."

The slight hope which the "Aristocrats" had cherished in the resistance of Lyons was dashed to the

ground when the troops of the Republicans laid it low with such fearful and unparalleled barbarity in the summer of 1793. This swept away the plan which Mme. de Lafayette had hitherto cherished, of making her way there, and then being able to leave France. The sale of M. de Lafayette's property took place soon after. His aunt, with her claim, purchased the mill of Langeac, which was the first offered for sale. Before the auction began, Mme. de Lafayette went to Brioude, there to protest before the district.

"*Citoyens*," she said, "I feel myself obliged to protest, before the sale begins, against the enormous injustice of applying the laws of emigration to one who is at this moment a prisoner of the enemies of France. I ask you to take note of my protestation."

The incongruity of their reasoning did not seem to strike those excellent gentlemen, who listened to the *Citoyenne* Lafayette with much respect. Some of the members proposed to transcribe her protest in the official report.

"No, *citoyens*," she said, "you might suffer for it, and that would truly grieve me; you must not involve yourself into difficulties out of politeness when you will not do so to avoid committing an act of injustice. As for me, thank God, I have never been accomplice to any; I will not be so in this case by my silence, and I ask you to register my protestation in a separate note." This they consented to do.

In spite of the harrowing anxiety, the uncertainty of her husband's fate ever oppressing her mind, she found time to educate her children, to walk with them, talk to, and provide them with simple amusements. Of the same pure and lofty type of mind as her mother, religion occupied much of the routine of her daily life; her conduct set an example to be followed by others. Though religious sympathies were more than dangerous, she assembled every Sunday all the poor and pious women of the village, and persisted in holding these

meetings, though they had been the object of many denunciations. She could not be accused of "aristocratic" leanings, so the changes were rung on her religious "fanaticism."

The decree of September 17, 1793, provided for houses of detention in every town, in which were to be incarcerated the relations—of whatever degree—of all the *émigrés*; or, to put it simply, every one who did not happen to be of the party in power. Committees were formed to point out suspects, being composed for the main part of the most violent Jacobins. These were under the direction of one Solon Reynard, of Le Puy, his office of representative gaining him this distinction. All the inhabitants hastened to provide themselves with the necessary certificates of *civism*. Mme. de Chavinac would not allow much to be said about *her* patriotism, so, not wanting to have papers which were better than hers, Mme. de Lafayette contented herself with a very insignificant one, though she could have had a much more satisfactory document from the municipality of Aurat. Each member of the household procured papers, and as they had to be taken to the Revolutionary Committee for countersigning, Adrienne took them to Brioude. Observing the bad feeling, the grudging, unwilling manner in which the certificates of her servants were approved, she did not present that of her aunt nor her own, which she had, with her usual unselfishness, kept for the last, fearing that she would meet with a refusal should hers be the first to come before the committee. When, a few days later, a member of the same committee came to Chavinac to burn such papers as were—in his opinion—*entachées de féodalité* (tainted with the spirit of feudal times), she beheld his proceedings with so much, such well-assumed indifference, that it caused much surprise, and great disappointment, in the mind of the commissary.

Immediately following this incident, the entire country was thrown into a great state of excitement and

despair. Every one known to have aided in any way the family of Lafayette was summarily arrested! Nobles, aristocrats, even some of the worthy patriots shared this fate. And, on the 21st Brumaire (November 1st) word came that Mme. de Lafayette herself was to be arrested the following day! She kept this dreadful intelligence to herself, not telling her family and servants till the next morning, wishing to spare them as long as possible the sorrow this news would bring. On the same day all the papers which had been condemned, a bust of the late king, also one of Mirabeau, and any emblems of royalty still remaining in that loyal household, were placed on a cart, the whole destined to make a huge bonfire for the people to dance around. But they were loyal at Chavinac, and refused to take part in a *fête* on the day when Mme. de Lafayette was arrested. The material was "of necessity" conveyed to Aurat, where other sentiments prevailed. That evening a detachment of the National Guard of Paulhaguet, in charge of a member of the Revolutionary Committee, M. Granchier, came to the château. Surrounded by those she loved, the order for her arrest was read to her. On presenting the certificate of *civism* which she had obtained, she was told that it was worthless, not having been countersigned by the committee.

"*Citoyen*," asked her daughter Anastasie, "are daughters prevented from following their mothers?"

"Yes, mademoiselle," he replied, and seemed moved when she insisted that she was sixteen, and therefore was included in the law. To change the subject, he talked of the many arrests he had made in the neighbourhood. He appears to have had a heart for one of his day, and allowed Mme. de Lafayette to remain with her family instead of insisting that she should pass the night in the church at Aurat, accepting her promise to join him before nine in the morning, when all the suspected prisoners were to start for Brioude.

As usual, she seemed the least concerned, " comforting and keeping up the spirits of all," until amid the tears of her servants, the cries, sobs, and clinging arms of her children, she left them the next morning—with what end to her journey heaven itself dared not predict.

Though the insufficient gaol at Brioude was crowded to suffocation, the new batch of unfortunates was at once locked within its grimy walls. Mme. de Lafayette found a place in a mean room which served as a passageway, and was already occupied by three *bourgeoises* of Brioude. One of them was a baker's wife, an honest and pious woman. They made room for their illustrious fellow-prisoner with kindness, and in a manner which touched her deeply. She was thankful for this retreat, having on first entering and passing through the prison been treated with much impertinence by a number of " aristocrat " ladies whom she had known before the Revolution, but had not seen since. This was not the time to worry over such trifles. Presently the " aristocrat " friends of yore fell under the charm of her personality, as others had been wont to do in happier days. Though the sword of Damocles hung over these people, the prison was a veritable hotbed of small coteries, all hating each other fiercely, but it is said, " for Mme. de Lafayette every one professed attachment." Finding the wisest course for her was to escape notice as much as possible—she could do nothing at the present moment to aid her cause or that of her husband—she prudently decided to follow this plan. With her usual fearlessness, she would be spokeswoman for others, being able, from her superior education and accomplishments, to present the wishes of her humble friends more satisfactorily than they could do of their own accord. She was always, with one exception, listened to with respect and treated politely. On this occasion, having suggested the necessity of giving more air to an unfortunate woman who was very ill and confined in a small room with eleven other per-

sons, she was assailed with a torrent of abuse too vile to transcribe. The gaolers of Brioude were not noted for their love of humanity, or distinguished for those humane characteristics beloved of the good and virtuous of this sphere. They as nearly approached the beasts of creation as it is possible for those in human guise to do. Given for the first time in their lives a little authority, and that over those to whom for centuries they had scarce dared to raise their eyes, there was nothing too low, too brutal, too vulgar or humiliating for them to inflict on their unhappy prisoners.

What a fearful experience for a woman daintily reared, of the nicest tastes and hypersensitive refinement, who since her birth had been surrounded by love and luxury! She had no comforts, she asked no favours. Her daughters sent her clean linen every week, sewing a list of what the basket contained to the cloth covering it. On the back of this paper they wrote the scanty news that it was safe to send, a mere line or two telling of their health. Strange to say, no one ever thought of examining this sheet of paper! The innkeeper's daughter, who brought in the meals and was a hardy, courageous child of thirteen, would force her way undeterred by blows or threats, to catch a glimpse of Mme. de Lafayette, so she could tell the family of her looks and health. Through M. Frestel, who succeeded in bribing the gaoler, it was found that her daughters might be able to pass a few hours with their mother. This was effected in January, when she had been in prison two months (1794). Anastasie, being the first to go, rode to Brioude at night, in the care of the faithful Frestel, and arriving there at dawn, hid all the following day at the house of an innkeeper who was devoted to the family. In the evening she was smuggled into the prison, spending the night in conversation with her mother, leaving before daylight for fear of discovery. Though brief, this meeting and the ones which followed were of great comfort to the prisoner,

but attended with so much danger to all concerned that they took place at intervals few and far between.

The heart of Adrienne was heavy as those long days dragged by. Her children were at Chavinac; she was with them in spirit, but the lonely mother yearned for more. The news brought from Paris told of the arrest of her mother and sister Louise on some absurd pretence. There were no details. Of her husband she knew nothing, or of what was passing in the outer world; that fearful world of blood and carnage to which she would be summoned ere long. Even the poor old aunt was arrested in January, 1794. On account of her age, they had the surprising humanity to allow her to remain at Chavinac. The terrible crime of which she was guilty, which had caused her arrest, lay in the fact that she was the mother of an *émigré*! Totally indifferent to her arrest, she was struck with the word " mother " as the commissary read the order.

" *Citoyen*," she answered, " I have no longer the happiness of being a mother! " and she burst into bitter tears at the memory of her daughter, whose loss, sixteen years ago, she had never ceased to mourn.

Being informed that the sale of her husband's property was about to be resumed, Mme. de Lafayette begged permission to be present, under a guard if the committee so desired. This request being presented by M. Frestel to the président, Reynaud, at Le Puy, was received with little consideration. He was obliged to summon all his self-control and listen to a torrent of abuse against M. de Lafayette. The humane M. Reynaud stormed violently at the absent patriot, " *whose bowels he should like to tear out* "; against Mme. de Lafayette, who was accused of being " *the arrogance of the Noailles personified* "; against the harmless and innocent children, who were " *serpents the Republic*

nurtured in her bosom." He naturally refused the request, and M. Frestel returned unsuccessful, his heart heavy and full of foreboding. This eloquent and refined (?) representative of the Republic, M. Reynaud, went shortly to Paris, where his presence did infinitely more harm to the Lafayette family than could Solon Reynaud have effected had he remained in the country. His successor, Guyardin, was less violent, but so imbued with the charms of republican simplicity that he constantly wore a *boutonnière* composed of a large wooden spoon and knife! It may have been that his hunger drove him to this flamboyant exhibition of patriotism, as, thus equipped, he was always in a position to "fall to!" at the first summons.

Through the unspeakable trials of this period Mme. de Lafayette's first thought was, as ever, for others. She comforted the inmates of that dreary prison with her presence, and eased their sufferings with the poor means at hand. "She suggested to a number of old and infirm women that they should share her meals," pretending it would be of benefit to all, as her part of the expense would be less; though in reality she paid for all and did the cooking. But in this way she was able to make less hard the lot of those surrounding her, and greatly alleviate the sufferings of an aged blind nun, against whom, on account of her calling, unusual severity was displayed. To a soul so exquisitely gentle as that of Adrienne de Lafayette, it was an unceasing trial to be involved in the quarrels of the prisoners, which were many, and naturally greatly augmented by their irksome confinement. Privacy of any sort was unknown, and Adrienne was obliged to live in a room, so called by courtesy, separated from the common passage by a screen only; and this she shared with five or six other unfortunates.

Through some secret channel, she received the intelligence that her mother and sister had been removed from their first prison, and were now in the Luxem-

bourg. She was almost stunned by this news. . . . It was another burden to be borne by those slender suffering shoulders. From the Luxembourg to the guillotine was but a few steps. Earnestly and fervently she prayed for those dear ones in such dire peril.

CHAPTER XV

ONE fair spring morning, one of those when budding trees and chirping birds brought home to the weary languishing prisoners all the charms of life of which they were so cruelly deprived, on the 8th Prarial (May, 1794) the ring of sharply echoing heels, the clatter of swords, mingling with and dominating the stifling noises of that stifling prison, announced a messenger. He bore an order for one of the prisoners, the *Citoyenne* Lafayette, who was ordered to be taken to Paris to that ill-omened prison, La Force. This famous building had, in the Middle Ages, been known as the Hôtel du Roi de Sicile, but took its present name from the fact of its belonging to Cumont, Duc de la Force, whose property it became in 1700. Fifty-four years later, Necker made of it what was considered a " model prison "; compared to the horrors of the Chatelet, though, even then it was not to be regarded as the ideal pleasant dwelling.

The order for Mme. de Lafayette's removal was brought by M. Gissauguer, the brother of her lawyer, M. Montfleury—at that time imprisoned—who was a captain of gendarmes. " He was so overcome by emotion that he was obliged to show the document from the Committee of General Safety to her without comment, as if mutely asking pardon for doing a duty so repellent to his feelings." Once again in the hour of trial did the heroic blood of the Noailles respond nobly. While others around her exclaimed, cried out, and manifested every symptom of fear and anxiety, she calmly said:

"It is not before the Revolutionary Committee I am called, *I am merely transferred to Paris.*" She then accompanied M. Montfleury upstairs to his room, where they consulted as to what means would be best to pursue. M. Gissauguer, who was deeply devoted to her on account of his brother, proposed to accompany her on that miserable journey, the ending of which was so problematic. Though the order commanded that she should travel "from brigade to brigade," he took upon himself to travel with her by the post, which would be, though far from luxurious, much more comfortable and less likely to cause her needless annoyance and humiliation in the towns through which they would pass.

"Monsieur," she said to him, with perhaps the ghost of a smile, "do you think it possible that I should find the means of escaping on the way? I should not wish to expose either yourself or your brother, to whom I owe my life. If not, I accept your offer."

It will be remembered that M. Montfleury, who was Président of the Council of the Département at the time of Mme. de Lafayette's first arrest, had prevented her being sent to Paris by using what influence he possessed. Once assured that such a chance of escape could be contained in the word "impossible," she consented to go with M. Gissauguer. All through those long night hours before they set out on their journey her brain was tormented by visions of flight, which she half decided to try before putting herself in the care of her friend. But as ever, the thought that the consequences of the action might be visited on the companions of her imprisonment caused her to resist the temptation, though with a sigh . . . who knows. . . . Finally, the beautiful spring day broke, sending these visions fleeting to join the spectres of many a vigil beneath that crime-haunted roof. She managed, however, to obtain twenty-four hours' delay, at once sending a messenger to summon her dear children, so she might

have the joy of seeing them—perhaps for the last time. Though she was so unconcerned and bore her trouble unflinchingly, she knew in her heart of hearts that this journey to Paris might, probably would, end fatally. Always one to look squarely in the face of good or evil fortune, she considered the interview with her children in the nature of an eternal farewell. They, poor things! were almost too young to grasp the awfulness of their times.

The aged *curé* of Chavinac, whose defence she had undertaken some time previously, was also a prisoner, and to him she went to make her confession. So overcome with emotion that he was scarcely able to perform the duties of his sacred office, he listened to the calm, low-spoken words of his sinless penitent. Mme. de Lafayette visited the good nuns who were imprisoned near by in a comfortless garret, and joined fervently in their prayers, cheering them with the hope that they would meet again ere long, though where no hushed lip dared ask. The simple grief of these good women was pitifully touching, and who knows if their fervent prayers may not have been heard and answered favourably. These partings over, she was taken to the common gaol where she was to pass the night, as there M. Frestel could gain admittance and converse with her, which he would not have been allowed to do had she remained in the prison which she had so long occupied.

"You may fancy our despair when we received on waking my mother's letter," wrote Virginie. "What news to startle one from heavy slumbers! The messenger had been delayed," and they were in an agony of apprehension that the beloved mother might before now be gone. They wept at the thought of her sitting waiting in anxiety, and with the unselfishness, ever a characteristic of the women of that family, bade M. Frestel start at once, without them, as their presence would make his journey slower. With streaming eyes they watched him out of sight, for had they not, per-

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haps, denied themselves the last meeting with the adored mother, who might soon be in eternity? Every moment was precious, and their hearts wished the messenger Godspeed as he galloped over those roads which had never seemed so long as on that fair June morning. In his pockets were the various pieces of jewellery, gold and trinkets which all the household, even the most humble, had contributed, that they might be sold and provide enough money to enable the beloved mistress of Chavinac to travel otherwise than in a common cart " from brigade to brigade."

Arriving at Brioude, M. Frestel found great excitement everywhere, even among the Jacobins. Taking advantage of this he cleverly managed to procure another twenty-four hours' delay, and sent a messenger flying to Chavinac, with instructions to spare neither man nor horse till those brave girls were clasped in their mother's arms. When they came M. Frestel led them into the cell, where they found their mother lying on a poor, comfortless bed, trying to gain some repose before beginning that uncertain journey. On the floor were the heavy fetters which her gaolers had been merciful humane enough not to put in use. A few brief words arranged that M. Frestel should travel near, in fact follow, Mme. de Lafayette's carriage; and after she had arrived in Paris, go at once to Melun, where Mr. Morris was at that time living, and beg him to do whatever his official position would allow for the benefit of the prisoner. At length, importuned on all sides, Mme. de Lafayette consented to allow Anastasie to accompany M. Frestel and add her voice to the general entreaty. Until this promise was given her, Anastasie's grief was something awful to behold; she could not control herself. Having obtained her wish she gave way to the wildest joy, and cried " that it did not seem as if her mother was going, now that she might go with her! " She rushed from the prison to go to Le Puy, where she must obtain a passport to leave the " Dé-

partement." She was to overtake and join her mother on the road to Paris. Virginie and George remained with their mother, who charged them, young as they were, with many messages to their aunt and to their father, whom she might never see again. She had just finished these last instructions to her son when the entrance of M. Gissauguer proclaimed the hour had struck; the parting could be postponed no longer. She took a tender farewell of the children, being far more grieved that they should be subjected to such misfortunes than at the fate which might await her, making them promise that they would seek every opportunity of joining their father . . . poor helpless little innocents!

Poor Anastasie! she had passed a day of dispiriting and innumerable failures. On her arrival at Le Puy, she proceeded immediately to the house of the *Citoyen* Guyardin, whom she begged to have an inquiry made in reference to her mother's conduct and forward it to Paris. Vulgar, low-bred, as all of his kind, he delighted in showing by the insolence of his manner, the contempt in which he held all women, more so when the one pleading to him had the misfortune to be an "aristocrat." He remained seated, apparently writing, during the interview, and paid no attention to the requests of Mlle. de Lafayette, brusquely refusing to read a letter from her mother which she presented. He then stopped writing for a moment, sneeringly remarked that he could not trouble himself about a prisoner who was summoned to Paris, adding some indecent jokes to his refusal. Anastasie left the room in a white heat of anger, furious, almost in a state of desperation, for she had not been able to obtain permission to leave the "Département." She then went to Aurat, where the municipality very kindly gave her, for her mother, the certificate of *civism*, which might be useful. It was respectfully worded, "and spoke in the strongest and most touching terms of the good wishes formed for her by the inhabitants." But, alas!

the municipality declared it was impossible to grant a passport to a noble. Anastasie was in frantic excitement and despair, for M. Frestel could delay no longer, and was obliged to go without her. She was brought home to Chavinac utterly prostrated with grief.

M. Frestel had been so delayed that he was barely able to overtake Mme. de Lafayette at Melun. The officials who countersigned his passport before he was able to leave the district said:

"He is going to be the officious advocate of those who ought not to have any."

"I wish," he replied, "I had the necessary talent, and I am sure that many, even in this hall, would envy me."

With dauntless intrepidity Mme. de Lafayette bore the discomforts of that harrowing journey, meeting with little annoyance until, on arriving at quaint Fontainebleau, her carriage was surrounded by a mob composed mostly of those terrible women who made the name of their sex a blot on the badly stained pages of the Revolution. They did not spare the unprotected woman, who faced a thousand eyes full of hatred as she had faced life with all its bitter trials, courageously, with a silent prayer. . . . To their vile comments she gave no heed, thinking, perhaps, of the days when her husband's name had been on every lip, hailed as the popular idol, the saviour of his country! What a lesson in the instability of public favour—particularly French favour!

M. Gissauguer sat with lowering brow and compressed lip, unable to resent or prevent such behaviour. He confessed afterward that had his prisoner tried to escape, he would not have had the heart to stop her. During the journey she remained almost silent, for, by that mental sympathy which sometimes exists, she felt what was passing in his mind, and knowing the consequences of such an escape, and the impossibility of being able to get safely out of France, resolutely avoided

referring to the topic. It was, perhaps, the greatest temptation to which she had ever been subjected. On their arrival, Mme. de Lafayette was sent at once to Le Petit Force, that prison whose horrors are too well known to dwell upon. It was, like all the other prisons and houses of detention, crowded to suffocation.

Her arrival took place on the 19th Prairial, the day before the Fête-de-l'Etre Suprême, at which Robespierre, dressed in a sky-blue coat, carrying a bunch of ripe wheat—some say flowers—made his last public appearance. For this day alone the guillotine was veiled, and those weary executioners given a much-needed rest. The pit under the guillotine where the blood of the victims drained was covered insecurely with loose boards, and on nearing the spot and scenting the rank odour of not dried blood, some of the oxen drawing one of the cars became so excited that they took fright, ran away, and caused a tremendous excitement, trampling and goring all who got in their way. Hardly was the surprising pageant over, when the fatal machine was again made in readiness for those whose turn was next. On the 22d began the *terreur dans le terreur*. Every day came news of the awful slaughters, the wanton horrors, committed in the name of "Liberté." Even the wildest imagination cannot picture such things as daily occurred in a city celebrated for its beauty and charm, the superior refinement of its inhabitants. There were numbers of people in La Force, as in all the prisons, who, it was well known, were arrested without the slightest cause or pretence. All were in danger, Mme. de Lafayette, perhaps, in the greatest of all, for her name was enough to damn her with any committee. She had not learned yet of the savage popular lust for murder which demanded that a certain number of prisoners be executed daily, who, it mattered not, provided Mme. Guillotine had her ample banquet of blood.

The great bodily discomforts to which she was sub-

jected were little heeded by the prisoner, though she was without even the meanest necessities; but she was in a terrible state of mind about her mother and sister, who were confined in the Luxembourg. She dared not inquire for them, thinking if she called attention to the relationship they would probably suffer more, from being connected with one so unpopular as herself. In two weeks she was transferred to Le Plessis, which by a strange irony of fate had been the school where her husband was in part educated, in those far-away sunny days when "Liberté" was unknown. This prison, in common with all others, was crowded, and one of the first persons to greet her was her cousin, the Duchesse de Duras, whom she had not met since the beginning of the Revolution; their widely differing political opinions, the duchesse naturally of the court party and Mme. de Lafayette a strong disciple of her husband, causing them to drift widely apart. Time had softened the duchesse, and she greeted her cousin warmly, glad to be able to speak of the old days to one who had known them. They at once renewed the friendship of their youthful days, never again to be broken or interrupted.

The gloomy days that followed were full of awful, heart-rending incidents. Not two days after Mme. de Lafayette had been in Le Plessis, she was asked to tell her cousin, the Duchesse de Duras, a daughter of the Maréchal de Mouchy ("Mme. l'Étiquette"), the awful news that her father and mother had fallen victims to the Terror. Again, to "that most interesting young woman," Mme. Caradeuc, a daughter-in-law of M. de Charlotais, she broke the dreadful tidings of her husband's execution. Since the law of 22d of Prairial, the list of the victims had been marked indiscriminately, without even a pretence of trial. It mattered not who, so long as the carts were full. One can hardly credit such unheard-of barbarity. A part of Le Plessis served as a *dépôt* to the Conciergerie, and each morning

could be seen a band of prisoners being led to the shambles. What a sight for those behind the heavy bars, who watched them going to the fate which might be theirs! Mme. de Lafayette wrote at this time: "The thought of soon being one of the victims makes one endure such a sight with more firmness." On two occasions she thought she heard her name called. She inhabited a tiny, comfortless garret room on the fifth floor, but it possessed one virtue in her eyes—that she occupied it alone. What were the thoughts of that unfortunate woman, torn from husband, children, and friends, in hourly anticipation of the fate which, unless a miracle intervened, would be hers? She was cut off from news of the outer world in matters relating to her affairs as surely as if she had been marooned on a desert island in a far-off tropical sea. Her garret window allowed her a view of the roof-tops and chimneys of that fair city in which all the happy and the sad memories of her life were indissolubly mingled . . . she thought of the dragging hours when her husband was far away beyond the ocean; she thought of the days when his word was a law to his fellow-citizens; she thought . . . but it would be vain to recall those memories, which she determinedly put away, fearing that the happiness she had once experienced, now so long gone, should unnerve her for the unknown trials which the future held. Poor Adrienne!

When she felt her courage weaken she would repeat passages of the belief, and while in this prison she made her will, from which are a few paragraphs:

"O Lord, thou hast been my help and my strength in the fearful troubles which have befallen me; thou art my God; all the events of my life are in thy hands, come to my help; do not forsake me, and I shall fear nothing, even in the midst of the shadows of death. . . .

"I pardon with all my heart my enemies, if I have any, my persecutors, whoever they may be, and even the persecution of those I love. I pray God to grant

them all his blessings and to pardon them as I do myself. O Lord, when by the means of thy grace I pray for my persecutors as sincerely as I now do, thou wilt not reject my prayers for those whom I love, and thou wilt treat us according to the greatness of thy mercy. Have pity on me, O my God!

"I declare that I have never ceased to be faithful to my country, that I have never shared in any political intrigue which could disturb its peace, that my most sincere wishes are for its happiness, that the principles of my attachment to it are immovable, and that no persecutions can shake them, from whatever side they may come. An example most dear to my heart sets me the example of these feelings.

"I give my tenderest blessings to my children, and I pray God at the price of my life, which I should have wished to devote to their happiness, that he himself may bring about that happiness by making them worthy of him."

She concludes in the spirit of the greatest Christian resignation which is so characteristic of her on this and all other occasions of her life.

And those poor children for whom she so earnestly prayed and besought mercy? Almost as soon as their mother had been torn away another great misfortune overtook them; this was the final sale of their father's property, the Château de Chavinac, all the furniture, and such treasures as were left after the various pillages which it had lately undergone. Mme. de Chavinac bought her bed and a few trifling articles, but grieved terribly at not being allowed to keep the picture of her brother, killed long ago at the battle of Minden, and to whom she had been very devotedly attached. He had been a colonel in the *Grenadiers de France*, and the father of the present Marquis de Lafayette. *O tempora! O mores!* To think that the children of the Lafayettes, who had given their lives for their kings and their country, should be obliged to

subsist on the scanty provisions brought cheerfully and without hope of recompense by the—as yet—unsuspected and friendly peasants of the Commune! Deprived of this means of sustenance, they would have starved. But the lords of Chavinac had ever been noted for their kindness to those dependent on them, and the present succour of the peasants seemed but a just return for the many benefits they and their forebears had enjoyed. And it is cheering to know, in times so onerous and fearful, a few loyal hearts yet beat with those rare sentiments, gratitude and love, and at the risk of their wretched lives some cared for the family so scattered and crushed by misfortune. . . . Rumour said that the children were to be sent to the hospital; their aunt to the prison at Brioude. Nothing definite was as yet known. A heavy pall of uncertainty overhung all. They awaited the worst.

CHAPTER XVI

DURING this time the Duchesse d'Ayen, Louise (Mme. de Noailles), and Mme. la Maréchale de Noailles (the Duchesse de Noailles), mother of the Duc d'Ayen, were in prison together. Shortly before the attack on the Tuileries (August 10, 1792), they had left the Hôtel de Noailles, which, from its situation, between the Jacobin club on one side and the "Assembly" at the foot of the garden, had ceased to be a safe place of residence, and gone to a small house in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, where Mme. de Grammont was then living. This change of residence being made known to the authorities, Mme. d'Ayen and her husband were summoned to appear before them and explain their reason for leaving the Hôtel de Noailles. This they did in a satisfactory manner, and as things became rather more quiet, returned to their home almost immediately. Then came their great anxieties, fearing they knew not what, for M. de Lafayette, who had just made his famous attack on the Jacobins. With much relief they left Paris as soon as the gates were opened, going on September 2d to Poissy to stay with Mme. d'Agusseau, wishing to be near Saint-Germain, where M. d'Ayen was living in retirement with his father, not daring to let his whereabouts be known to his many enemies. It was about this time that they received the news of Mme. de Lafayette's arrest. M. de Lafayette was imprisoned in Germany, and there was nothing to be done at the moment but watch and wait. The calm of their quiet retreat and the constant society of her

husband compensated Mme. d'Ayen for the sorrow and trials of past years. The news of the tragic death of her king was a fearful shock, and left an ineffaceable impression on her mind. She went to Saint-Germain in the winter of 1793, to be with her father-in-law, who was in very poor health, and found much pleasure in her society. To do this, she denied herself the promised pleasure of going to Chavinac to spend part of the winter. Had she not been so self-denying the future might have proved very different for both of them.

Though political affairs were more than unsettled, she and Louise went constantly to Paris during that winter, leaving no stone of influence unturned to better the condition of the prisoner of Chavinac. But before all, they sought the consolation of their religion, and no danger, however great, kept them from the performance of those duties which gave them such strength and pleasure. Deaf to the prayers of her husband, Louise de Noailles refused to join him in England, where safety could be found. She pleaded the necessity of remaining to look after her fortune; while the truth was that she could not bear the thought of parting from and leaving her mother in danger in order to save herself and her children. The feelings of her husband counted for nothing in the matter. She suffered for her devotion. Had Mme. d'Ayen followed her half-planned purpose of leaving France, as she had at one time intended, there is no doubt Louise would have accompanied her and escaped the tragic fate awaiting them both.

In April, 1793, M. d'Ayen, who had not been able to obtain certificates of residence satisfactory enough to allow him to remain in France, was obliged to go to Switzerland, much to the sorrow of his wife. The sudden illness of the old Maréchal de Noailles prevented her from going to Chavinac, adding one more sorrow to the many which those devoted women had to bear. There was another in store for them, for, at the end

of the month of August, after a hæmorrhage lasting four-and-twenty hours, the Maréchal de Noailles passed away, leaving an insupportable vacancy in the little circle of those who surrounded and loved him. The family soon afterward returned to Paris, hoping to distract the mind of Mme. d'Ayen, whose health gave great anxiety to her children. It was against the prayers and entreaties of the absent Adrienne that they took this step. Her presentiments of evil were soon fulfilled. On the first days of their return they were put under arrest, but do not seem to have been at all alarmed or apprehensive, as they were allowed to remain, under a guard, at the Hôtel de Noailles. The cheerful intelligence that M. d'Ayen, now by the death of his father Duc de Noailles, had reached Switzerland in safety, though nearly penniless, was quite reassuring. Fortunately the care and education of Mme. de Noailles's three children now occupied a large portion of time which otherwise might have been spent in grieving and useless repining for those who were so far away. M. Grellet, their tutor, whom they regarded as an older brother, and in every way one of the family, did much for them in the days of trial to follow, and showed a devotedness and courage worthy of the great trust placed in him by the parents of his young charges. It was owing to his untiring efforts that they had the attendance of the Abbé Carrichon in their last moments. By one of those marvellous turns of fortune's wheel, M. Grellet, though imprisoned and in the most frightful peril, miraculously escaped the fate of so many of his friends and contemporaries.

Though confined in their own home, once so splendid, now so deserted, Mme. d'Ayen and her daughter were allowed to receive the visits of a few friends. Mme. de Menou, the daughter of Mme. de Saron (Mme. d'Ayen's sister), came often, and their doctor, M. Lobinhes, sometimes dined with them. But they asked no sympathy, finding ample consolation in the

Divine Providence which had been their support during life; and it was the daily pleasure of the grandmother to teach those young hearts the truth and beauties of Christianity, as in the bygone days she had instructed their mother and her other children. This was undoubtedly the one great joy and comfort of her life. But such comparative safety was not to last much longer. One day the *détenus* were summoned to answer questions, to give descriptions of their every daily, hourly thoughts and actions. The ladies replied with straightforwardness and very promptly, having prepared their answers beforehand. They were treated politely and returned unmolested. The inventory of their worldly possessions had been drawn up by the committee, and, not wishing to be obliged to swear that they had concealed nothing, "while having valuables in their possession," Mme. d'Ayen boldly attached to her side, in the form of a watch chain or châtelaine, all the diamonds and other jewels which were left her. By this very openness they were saved, and the same day she sold them to a jeweller, who gave her at the moment enough money to pay some small debts, the rest to be paid later. This, however, the duchesse never received, as the jeweller was beheaded the next day! They were now reduced to absolute poverty, having nothing left to sell but a few clothes and *chiffons* belonging to Louise de Noailles, for which they received a few francs. Long before this, M. Frestel had put at their disposition all his worldly possessions, "with that generous cheerfulness which was one of his many endearing qualities." This pitiful lack of money did not cause them to murmur, seeming a very small misfortune compared to the many others, the hardest to bear being the execution of M. de Saron, Mme. d'Ayen's brother-in-law, the *premier président du Parlement de Paris*, on Easter Sunday of the year 1794. All the managers of her husband's estates, all men of business, had long ago been arrested, and the wildest

confusion prevailed everywhere. Mme. d'Ayen and her daughter seem to have felt little or no alarm, though numbers of helpless women were murdered every day. Like most women of their temperament and steadfast faith, they were prepared for what might be their fate, having exacted a promise from their dearly loved Abbé Carrichon that he would accompany them to the scaffold should destiny call them there.

In May, 1794, being obliged to leave the splendid Hôtel de Noailles, by order of the Revolutionary Tribunal, they immediately engaged a small house, and it was while making some inquiries in reference to their furniture that the attention of those in authority was drawn to them. Alas, on how slight a thread hinges matters of life and death! Had it not been for this trivial occurrence, the family might yet have escaped the popular vengeance, for events followed events with such mad rapidity that the execrated of one day was the popular hero of the next, and *vice versa*—and a good deal of *vice versa*, too! They were immediately and delightedly seized, led from one prison door to another; finally, in company with Mme. la Maréchale de Noailles (Mme. d'Ayen's mother-in-law), being allowed to rest in the Luxembourg, where such heart-rending scenes were daily enacted. Being separated from the children was undoubtedly their most cruel sorrow, and to this was added the great and overwhelming worry as to what would be their fate. That the scaffold should be the only outlet from the prison was the inevitable conclusion long ere the sad news was conveyed by M. Grellet. Despite the almost insurmountable and greatest difficulties, this courageous friend had managed to keep up a correspondence with the prisoners, in this way giving some knowledge of what was taking place in the outer world. The care of Mme. la Maréchale de Noailles, whose health was very precarious, occupied her daughter and granddaughter constantly. Their courage was maintained and strength-

ened by a priest, at that time a fellow-prisoner, and once more do we find the mind of Mme. d'Ayen agitated, as in her early childhood, by those doubts and restlessnesses, ever so strong a trait of her character. It seems strange that in the midst of all the sufferings and physical discomfort, she should be so troubled in this fashion. The duchesse forgot no one belonging to her, leaving such messages as she was able, and greatly recommended her maid, who had remained faithful to her mistress through every discomfort and privation, and "exhorted her with every possible detail to take care of her health." Through M. Grellet she learned that her daughter Adrienne had been brought to Paris, and suffered cruelly from the fact that they were so near and yet for ever divided; but she wrote to Mme. de Lafayette a letter containing much comforting advice. Mme. d'Ayen was with the Duchesse d'Orléans, mother of Louis Philippe, and a connection of her husband's family, when the news came that she and Louise were to go to the Conciergerie. This was equivalent to the sentence of death. She kept the news from the Duchesse d'Orléans, not wishing to distress her, and calmly went on with the trifling occupation in hand. Again, in this terrible trial Mme. d'Ayen was sustained and uplifted by fervent prayer. In all her sorrows she had much comfort from "that angelic creature," Louise de Noailles, whose lot it was "to support my mother, and return to her at that last moment, all the love and the care she had received from her from her birth to her death."

They arrived at the Conciergerie after a most fatiguing passage through the crowded streets, Mme. d'Ayen being prostrated with fatigue and excitement. Louise de Noailles managed to have a few words with M. Grellet, who had gone to a *café* adjoining the *guichet* (wicket), and conveyed to him the messages of her mother. From this moment until their fatal end the sufferings of these noble women cannot be more

eloquently pictured than in the words of those who witnessed the tragic scenes.

"I was told, on leaving the prison that there was a *dame* Lavet who had been in the Conciergerie in the same cell as Mmes. de Noailles and d'Ayen. I repaired to her immediately in order to gather from her the details of their short and horrible stay in that prison. She gave them to me as follows:

(signed) "NOAILLES,
"Duchesse de Duras."

(The Duchesse de Duras was a daughter of Mme. de Mouchy—"Mme. l'Étiquette"—and a sister of the Vicomte de Noailles, husband of Louise.)

The following is the narrative of Mme. Lavet: "The *citoyennes* Noailles, (the Duchesse d'Ayen, the Vicomtesse de Noailles, and the Maréchale de Noailles,) arrived at the Conciergerie on the 21st of July, 1794, extremely fatigued by their removal from the Luxembourg, which had been effected in very rough carriages. They greatly needed some nourishment, but it was impossible to give them any, because it was nine o'clock in the evening, and the regulations did not allow of anything being introduced into the prison after dark." At this time they were so poor that they had no money to buy food, and only after a most minute search through her pockets did Louise de Noailles find a few sous, with which she purchased a glass of currant water for her mother and grandmother. "They were put in a cell with three other women, one of whom knew Mme. de Lafayette by name; this circumstance interested her in favour of Mme. de Lafayette's relations. She tried to procure beds for them, but the turnkeys absolutely refused to give them any, on making the discovery that the prisoners had not in their possession the sum of forty-five francs, which they wished to extort from

them. They had been divested of everything at the Luxembourg. The Vicomtesse de Noailles had only fifty sous in her pocket." Mme. Lavet, deeply impressed with the misfortunes of that unhappy family, gave her bed to the Maréchale de Noailles, so the last night on earth of the daughter of the proud Cossé-Brissacs owed its poor comfort to the consideration of an utter stranger. The same pitying hand arranged a sort of pallet for Mme. d'Ayen and her daughter, which the latter declined to occupy, saying that "she had too short a time to live for it to be worth while to take the trouble." Her mother passed most of the night in trying to make her do so.

"Think," she said, "of what we shall have to go through to-morrow."

"Ah, maman!" she answered, "what need have we to rest on the eve of eternity?"

She asked for a prayer book and a light, by which she was enabled to read. She prayed during the whole night, interrupting herself occasionally to attend to her grandmother, who slept for several hours at different intervals, and who, each time she awoke, would read and read over the *acte d'accusation*, repeating to herself: "No, I cannot be condemned for a conspiracy which I have never heard of; I shall defend my cause before the judges in such a manner that they will be obliged to acquit me."

She thought of her dress, and feared that it might be tumbled; she settled her cap, and could not believe that for her that day was to be the last. Mme. d'Ayen had fears, but she did not see the extent of the danger. She dozed for a few minutes. The wish of sending to her grandchildren her watch, which was the last thing left her, caused her much agitation. She begged her companions to take charge of it. "*It is the last thing I can send them*," she said. They dared not, and the same answer was returned Mme. de Noailles, who wished to send the only thing she had, an empty pocket-

book and a lock of hair, to her children; even her portrait was too dangerous. She was told that such a mission would endanger all the persons who inhabited the room. She asked Mme. Lavet to send word to M. Grellet that she died with great peace of mind and perfect resignation, but that she regretted him as well as her children with all the tenderness of her heart. The name of her beloved sister, Mme. de Lafayette, was pronounced in that dreadful abode. She imposed silence for fear of putting her in danger. She made no attempt to seek for repose. Her eyes remained open to contemplate that heaven into which she was about to enter. Her face reflected the serenity of her soul. The idea of immortality supported her courage. Never was so much calm witnessed in such a place. But she would forget everything to be of use to her mother and grandmother. At six in the morning Mme. de Bouffles, a relation of M. de Lafayette, brought them some chocolate. She was accompanied by some ladies who remained a minute with them, and bade them an eternal farewell. Nine o'clock struck. The *hussiers* carried off their victims. Tears were shed by those who had known them only twelve hours. The mothers made some arrangements for the event of an acquittal. The daughter, who did not doubt of the doom which awaited them, thanked Mme. Lavet with that charming manner which was in her a gift of nature, expressed all her gratitude for her kind attentions, and added:

"*Votre figure est hereuse, vous ne périez pas.*"

. . . . .

Narrative of the death of Mmes. d'Ayen and de Noailles, by M. Carrichon, priest of the Congregation of the Oratoire.

"The Maréchale de Noailles (*née* Cossé-Brissac) and the Duchesse d'Ayen, her daughter-in-law, and the Vicomtesse de Noailles, her granddaughter, were detained prisoners in their own house from November,

1793, till April, 1794. The first I only knew by sight, but was well acquainted with the two others, whom I generally visited once a week. Terror and crime were increasing together; victims were becoming more numerous. One day, as the ladies were exhorting each other to prepare for death, I said to them, as by foresight: '*If you go to the scaffold, and if God gives me strength to do so, I shall accompany you.*'

"They took me at my word, and eagerly exclaimed, '*Will you promise to do so?*' For one moment I hesitated.

"'Yes,' I replied, '*and so that you may easily recognise me, I shall wear a dark blue coat and a red waistcoat.*' Since then they have often reminded me of my promise.

"In the month of April, 1794, during Easter week, they were all conveyed to the Luxembourg. I had frequent accounts of them through M. Grellet, whose delicate attentions and zealous services were of much use both to them and to their children. I was often reminded of my promise. On the 27th of June, on a Monday or a Friday, he came to beg of me to fulfil the engagement I had taken with the Maréchal de Mouchy and his wife.

"I went to the Palais de Justice and succeeded in entering the court. I stood very near, with my eyes fixed on them during a quarter of an hour. M. and Mme. de Mouchy, whom I had only seen once at their own house, and whom I knew better than they knew me, could not distinguish me in the crowd. God inspired me, and with his help I did all I could do for them. The Maréchal was singularly edifying, and prayed aloud with all his heart. The day before, on leaving the Luxembourg, he had said to those who had given him marks of sympathy:

"'*At seventeen years of age I mounted the breach for my King; at seventy-seven I ascend the scaffold for my God; my friends, I am not to be pitied.*'

"I avoid details which would be interminable. That day I thought it useless to go as far as the guillotine, besides, my courage failed me. This was ominous for the fulfillment of the promise I had made to their relations who were thrown into the deepest affliction by this catastrophe. They had all been confined in the same prison, and had been of great comfort to each other.

"I could say much about the numerous and dismal processions which preceded or followed that of the 27th and which were happy or miserable, according to the state of mind of those who composed them; sad they always were, even when every exterior sign denoted resignation and promised a Christian death, but truly heart-rending when the doomed victims had none of these feelings, and seemed about to pass from the sufferings of this world to those of the next.

"On the 22d of July (1794) on a Tuesday morning, as I was just going out, I heard a knock. I opened the door, and saw the Noailles children with their tutor. The children were cheerful, as is usually the case with them at that age, but under their merriment was concealed sadness of heart caused by their recent losses and by their fears for the future; the tutor looked sad, careworn, pale, and haggard. *'Let us go to your study,'* he said, *'and leave the children in this room.'* We did so. He threw himself on a chair.

"*'All is over, my friend,'* he said. *'The ladies are before the Revolutionary Tribunal. I summon you to keep your word. I shall take the boys to Vincennes to see little Euphémie,'* (their sister). *'While in the woods I shall prepare these unfortunate children for their terrible loss.'*

"Although I had been prepared for this news, I was greatly shocked. The frightful situation of the parents, of the children, of their worthy tutor, that youthful mirth so soon to be followed by so much misery, poor little Euphémie, then only four years old, all

these thoughts rushed upon my mind. I soon recovered myself, and after a few questions and answers full of mournful details, I said to M. Grellet:

"'*You must go now, and I must change my dress. What a task I have before me! Pray that God may give me strength to accomplish it.*'

"We rose and found the children innocently amusing themselves, looking gay and happy. The sight of them, the thought of their unconsciousness of what they were soon to learn, and of the interview which would follow with their little sister, rendered the contrast more striking, and almost broke my heart. Left alone after their departure, I felt terrified and exhausted. 'My God have pity on them and on me!' I exclaimed. I changed my clothes and went to two or three places. With a heavy load on my heart I turned my steps towards the 'Palais de Justice,' between one and two in the afternoon. I tried to get in, but found it impossible. I made enquiries of a person who had just left the tribunal. I still doubted the truth of the news which had been told me. But the answer destroyed all illusion and all hope; I could doubt no longer. Once more I went on my way, and turned my steps towards the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. What thoughts, what agitations, what secret terrors distracted my poor brain! I opened my heart to a friend whom I could trust, and who, speaking to me in God's name, strengthened my courage. At his house I took some Coffee, which seemed to relieve my head.

"Thoughtful and irresolute, I slowly retraced my steps to the 'Palais de Justice,' dreading to get there, and hoping not to find those for whom I was seeking. I arrived before five o'clock. There were no signs of departure. Sick at heart, I ascended the steps of the Saint-Chapelle, then I walked slowly unto the *Grande salle*, and walked about. I sat down, I rose again, but spoke to no one. From time to time I cast a melancholy glance towards the courtyard, to see if there were

any signs of departure. My constant thought was that in two hours, perhaps one, they would be no more. I cannot say how overwhelmed I was by that idea, which has affected me all through life on such occasions, and they have been only too frequent. While a prey to these mournful feelings, never did an hour appear to me so long or so short as the one which elapsed between five and six o'clock on that day. Conflicting thoughts were constantly crossing my mind, which made me suddenly pass from the illusions of vain hopes to fears, alas! too well founded. At last I saw from a movement in the crowd, that the prison door was on the point of being opened. I went down and placed myself near the outer gate, as for the previous fortnight it had been impossible to enter the prison yard. The first cart was filled with prisoners and came toward me. It was occupied by eight ladies whose demeanour was most edifying. Of these, seven were unknown to me. The last, who was very near me, was the Maréchale de Noailles. A transient ray of hope crossed my heart when I saw that her daughter and granddaughter were not with her, but alas! they were in the second cart.

"Mme. de Noailles was in white, which she had not left off since the death of her father, and mother-in-law, (the Maréchal and Maréchale de Mouchy,) and she did not appear more than twenty-four years of age; Mme. d'Ayen, who looked about forty, wore a deshabille of striped blue and white. Six men got in after them. I was pleased to see the respectful distance at which the first two placed themselves, so as to leave more room for the ladies. They were scarcely seated when the mother became the object of that tender solicitude for which her daughter was well known.

"I heard one near me say: '*Look at the young one; how anxious she seems! See how she is speaking to the other one.*' For my part I felt as if I had heard all they were saying. '*Mama, he is not there.*' '*Look*

again.' 'Nothing escapes me—I assure you he is not there!'

"They had evidently forgotten that I had sent them word that it would be impossible for me to gain entrance to the prison yard. The first cart stopped before me during at least a quarter of an hour. It moved on, the second followed. I approached the ladies, they did not see me. I went again into the 'Palais de Justice,' and then a long way round, and stood at the entrance of the Pont-au-Change, in a prominent place. Mme. de Noailles cast her eyes around, she passed and did not see me. I followed the cart over the bridge, and thus kept near the ladies, though separated from them by the crowd. Mme. de Noailles still looking for me, did not perceive me. Mme. d'Ayen's anxiety became visible on her countenance. Her daughter watched the crowd with increasing attention, but in vain. I felt tempted to turn back. Have I not done all that I could, I inwardly exclaimed? Everywhere the crowd will be greater; it is useless to go any further. I was on the point of giving up the attempt. Suddenly the sky became overclouded, thunder was heard in the distance. I made a fresh effort. A short cut brought me before the carts to the rue Saint-Antoine, nearly opposite the too famous 'Force.' At that moment the storm broke forth, the wind blew violently; flashes of lightning and claps of thunder followed in rapid succession; the rain poured down in torrents. I took shelter at a shop door. The spot is always present in my memory, and I have never passed by it since without emotion. In one moment the street was cleared; the crowd had taken refuge in the shops and gateways. There was less order in the procession, both the escort and the carts having quickened their pace. They were close to the 'Petit Saint-Antoine,' and I was still undecided. The first cart passed. By a precipitate and involuntary movement I quitted the shop door and rushed towards the second cart, and found myself close

to the ladies. Mme. de Noailles perceived me, and smiling, seemed to say:

"'*There you are at last! How happy we are to see you! How we have looked for you! Mama, there he is!*'

"Mme. d'Ayen began to revive. As for myself, all the irresolution vanished from my mind. By the grace of God I felt possessed of extraordinary courage. Soaked with rain and perspiration, I continued to walk by them. On the steps of the church of Saint-Louis I met a friend, who, filled with respect and attachment for the ladies, was endeavouring to give them the same assistance. His countenance, his attitude, showed what he felt. I placed my hand on his shoulder, and shuddering, said, 'Good evening, my friend.'

"The storm was at its height. The wind blew tempestuously and greatly annoyed the ladies in the first cart, more especially the Maréchale de Noailles. With her hands tied behind her, with no support for her back, she tottered upon the wretched plank upon which she was placed. Her large cap fell back and exposed to view some gray hairs. Immediately a number of people who were gathered there, notwithstanding the rain, having recognised her, she became the sole object of their attention. They added by their insults to the sufferings she was enduring so patiently.

"'*There she is, that Maréchale who used to go about with so many attendants, driving in such fine coaches; there she is in the cart, just like the others!*'

"The shouts continued, the sky became darker, the rain fell heavier still. We were close to the *carrefour* preceding the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. I went forward, examined the spot, and said to myself, 'This is the place for granting them what they so much long for.'

"The cart was going slower, I turned towards the ladies, and made a sign which Mme. de Noailles understood perfectly.

"'*Mama, M. Carrichon is going to give us absolution,*' she evidently whispered. They piously bowed their heads, with a look of repentance, contrition, and hope. Then I lifted my hand, and, without uncovering my head, pronounced the form of absolution and the words which follow it distinctly and with supernatural attention. Never shall I forget the expression of their faces. From that moment the storm abated, the rain diminished, and seemed only to have fallen for the furtherance of our wishes. I offered up my thanks to God, and so did, I am sure, those pious women. Their exterior appearance spoke contentment, security, and joy. As we advanced through the Faubourg, the rain having ceased, a curious multitude again lined the sides of the streets, insulting the ladies in the first cart, but above all the Maréchale. Nothing was said to the others. I sometimes walked by the side of the cart, and sometimes preceded them.

"At last we reached the fatal spot. I cannot describe what I felt. What a moment! What a separation! What an affliction for the children, husbands, sisters, relations, and friends who are to survive those beloved ones in this valley of tears! There they are before me full of health, and in one moment I shall see them no more. What anguish! Yet not without deep consolation at beholding them so resigned.

"We came in sight of the scaffold. The carts stopped, and were immediately surrounded by the soldiers. A ring of numerous spectators soon formed, most of whom were laughing and amusing themselves at the horrible sight. It was dreadful to be amongst them.

"While the executioner and his two assistants were helping the prisoners out of the first cart, Mme. de Noailles's eyes sought for me in the crowd. She caught sight of me. What a wonderful expression there was in those looks! Sometimes raised towards heaven, sometimes lowered towards earth, her eyes so ani-

mated, so gentle, so expressive, so heavenly, were often fixed on me in a manner which would have attracted notice if those around me had had time for observation. I pulled my hat over my eyes without taking them off her. I felt as if I could hear her say: *'Our sacrifice is accomplished; we have the firm and comforting hope that a merciful God is calling us to him. How many dear to us we leave behind! but we shall forget no one. Farewell to them, and thanks to you. Jesus Christ who died for us is our strength. May we die in him. Farewell. May we all meet in heaven!'*

"It is impossible to give an idea of the animation and fervour of those signs, the eloquence of which was so touching that a bystander exclaimed: *'Oh, that young woman, how happy she seems, how she looks up to heaven, how she is praying! But what is the use of it all?'* and then, on second thoughts, *'Oh, the rascals, the bigots!'*

"The mother and daughter took a last farewell of each other and descended from the cart. As for me, the outer world disappeared for a moment. At once broken-hearted and comforted, I could only return thanks to God for not having waited for this moment to give them absolution, or, what would have been still worse, delayed it until they had ascended the scaffold. We could not have joined in prayer while I gave and they received this great blessing as we had been enabled to do in the most favourable circumstances possible at such a time. I left the spot where I was standing and went over to the other side, while the victims were getting out. I found myself opposite to the wooden steps which led to the scaffold. An old man, tall and straight, with white hair and a good-natured countenance, was leaning against it. I was told he was a *fermier général.* Near him stood a very edifying lady whom I did not know. Then came the Maréchale de Noailles exactly opposite me, dressed in black taffetas, for she was still in mourning for her husband. She was

sitting on a block of wood or stone which happened to be there, her large eyes fixed with a vacant look. I had not omitted to do for her what I had done for so many and in particular for the Maréchal and Maréchale de Mouchy. All the others were drawn up in two lines looking towards the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. From where I stood I could only see Mme. d'Ayen, whose attitude and countenance expressed the most sublime, unaffected, and devout resignation. She seemed only occupied with the sacrifice she was about to make to God, through the merits of the Saviour, his divine son. She looked as she was wont to do when she had the happiness of approaching the altar for holy communion. I shall never forget the impression she made on me at that moment. It is often in my thoughts. God grant that I may profit by it!

"The Maréchale de Noailles was the third person who ascended the scaffold. The upper part of her dress had to be cut away in order to uncover her throat. I was impatient to leave the place, yet I wished to drink the cup of bitterness to the dregs and to keep my promise, as God was giving me strength to do so, even in the midst of all my shuddering horror. Six ladies followed; Mme. d'Ayen was the tenth. How happy she seemed to die before her daughter! The executioner tore off her cap, as it was fastened by a pin which he had forgotten to remove; he pulled her hair violently, and the pain he caused was visible on her countenance.

"The mother disappeared, the daughter took her place. What a sight to behold that young creature, all in white, looking still younger than she really was, like a gentle lamb going to the slaughter! I fancied I was witnessing the martyrdom of one of the young virgins or holy women whom we read of in the history of the church. What had happened to the mother also happened to her; the same pin in the removal of her cap, then the same composure, the same death. Oh! the abundant crimson stream that gushed from her

head and neck; how happy she is now, I thought, as her body was thrown into that frightful coffin!

"May Almighty God in his mercy bestow on the members of that family all the blessings which I ask and entreat them to ask for mine! May we all be saved with those who have gone before us to that happy dwelling where revolutions are unknown, to that abode which, according to the words of Saint Augustine, has truth for its King, Charity for its law, and will endure for eternity!"

CHAPTER XVII

MME. DE LAFAYETTE was kept at La Force and Le Plessis in all fifty days. It is extraordinary that she did not hear of her mother's death, as it was the custom to read every morning, outside the prisons, a list of the victims of the preceding day. She was spared many hours of anguish over the irremediable. What would come next none could, none dared, conjecture. Blood ran in torrents at the nod of the infamous, inhuman tyrant whose thirst for defenseless murder has not been equalled in history. Robespierre was the law. His spies were in each secret nook of the country. When one of the preconsuls, whom the tyrant sent into the départements to quicken the motions of the guillotine, had done a good day's work, that is to say, in their language, levelled many heads, he wrote: "We have put the country in train; we have made the rich dance a fine *Carmagnole*; the *holy guillotine* goes on well."

Robespierre intrigued with the enemies of France. He secretly bought property in England; this fact came to light after the death of the monster. When he and his confederates desired the death of any one, they promptly had him accused of being a *Federalist*. What the exact meaning of the word was no one knew; it served its purpose. The unfortunate was convicted of being a "Federalist," and the "holy guillotine" eagerly drank his blood. So much for the administrative qualities of M. Robespierre.

It is incredible how France stood the tyranny of this nobody, who, five years before (1789), an insig-

nificant member of the States Général, had risen to a height of power and autocracy never surpassed or equalled among the ancients.

"Read Roman history in the times of Catiline, Nero, or Tiberius, and you will not be able to find a time when appearances were so disregarded." "How was it that the 'Enlightened and powerful Assembly,' that the whole of France, did not open its eyes at those terrible massacres, those awful deluges of innocent blood?" How did France endure those barbarous arrests; those taxes and arbitrary requisitions; those thousands of scaffolds and victims; those violations of all rights and principles; those destructions of persons pretendedly suspected, by others more suspicious; that crowd of sufferers of every sex, heaped up in dungeons, mutilated, tortured, condemned without pretext—without even being heard? How, indeed . . . was it to nourish those vampires that France devoured and destroyed herself for so long a period? . . . It was as if hell let loose her furies against France!

Gradually Robespierre gathered in his hands the reins of absolute power. To him were sent lists of the victims of the Revolutionary Tribunals, which he marked with an "A" or a "C"—"Acquitted" or "Condemned"—against names which struck his fancy, and the "C" was a letter much preferred by him to that commencing the alphabet. He alone signed the sentences of execution; and, as he became more powerful, shed innocent blood with less and less compunction. "Rome had a series of tyrants in succession, or, at least, at short intervals, but France had at one and the same instant, a host of Caligulas. Tacitus himself would have broken his pencil from regret at not being able to paint all the crimes which sprang from the monstrous . . . the ferocious Robespierre." This fearful state of blood and carnage lasted for eighteen months. "Liberty slept only on mattresses of dead carcasses."

Robespierre at length decided that a religious basis was necessary to uphold his dominion, and, regarding himself in the light of a second Mahomet, promptly commanded a festival in honour of the "Supreme Being," which he attended dressed in a sky-blue coat, with exquisite ruffles of lace, and holding a bunch of flowers, fruit, and ripe wheat in his hand. The services began in the presence of a vast concourse of people. The diary of that gruesome person, Sanson, at that time executioner, has the following entry:

Prairial 21st: The festival of the Supreme Being took place yesterday. Flowers were brought from miles around in honour of the Divinity; but the Pontiff did not pronounce the words of clemency expected. We removed the scaffold, and this gave credence to the rumours of amnesty. The hideous cesspool of blood which lies under the scaffold was covered with long and strong planks. Brilliant as the proceedings were, the day was not exactly a success. They say it was the festival of discord, not of the Supreme Being. If Robespierre did not claim the finest privilege of royalty, clemency, he at least appropriated its haughty formalities. He is accused of having made the Convention wait for him, with having preceded the Representatives, as if to show that they were only a gang of inferiors; even the elegance of his dress, the proportions of the banquet which he held are criticised, and for some irrepressible Republicans these are unmistakable tokens of his royalist leanings."

This extraordinary exhibition began with a chorus of more than two thousand singing a hymn to the Supreme Being. Bands of young girls scattered flowers, then, advancing dramatically, Robespierre set fire to two colossal figures, meant to represent Atheism and Superstition. By an ingenious arrangement, as they burnt Wisdom appeared; but —very typically, though unintentionally—Wisdom was blackened badly with

fire and smoke. This pleasant *fieste* over, the guillotine was immediately replaced and set in motion.

Like all wicked and jealous creatures, Robespierre and his colleagues, actuated by suspicion and jealousy, finally quarrelled among themselves. After stormy scenes, he who had dictated the law, commanded the death of thousands, was ignominiously arrested, and on July 28, 1794, reluctantly compelled to ascend the steps of the scaffold and test the care-killing qualities of the " holy guillotine " which he had been so fond of prescribing for others. *Sic semper tyrannis!*

What effect did the news of the monster's death have on those crowds of his victims filling the prisons? They were at first too stunned, too apathetic, to give it much thought, much less grasp at once what it might mean to them. Perhaps a worse time was coming. It might mean anything. They waited in listless anxiety. Then came the rumour that the Revolutionary Tribunes had stopped. Taking advantage of a momentary lull, Mme. de Lafayette sought a means of sending to the Luxembourg for news of her mother, yet she hesitated, fearing to bring additional danger on those so dear to her. Finally, the Duchesse de Duras wrote. The reply, a mere scribble on a bit of dirty paper, told the dreadful news . . . The shock was too fearful to comprehend, too much to describe. Those whom they loved were no more. . . . Mme. de Lafayette's grief was uncontrollable. She was crushed; utterly stunned. In her letters to her children she assures them " that they will be of much comfort to her," but at first it seemed to her impossible that she should ever receive any. She was incapable of feeling anything more. She wrote to them later: " To return thanks to God for having preserved my strength, my life, my reason; do not regret that you were far from me. God kept me from revolting against Him, but for a long time I could not have borne the slightest appearance of human comfort."

"Her submission to the will of that God who had called to Himself those pious victims was complete. She made frequent use of the Psalms, and no one ever felt their beauty more than she did. She had procured while at Le Plessis a small Psalm book, all in Latin; although she was unacquainted with that language, she was so thoroughly versed in the service of the church that this book was of the greatest comfort to her. It soothed the heart blighted by torture of all kinds."

"Often," she wrote to her children, "I find in the sentiments of those who are gone, the thoughts I should like you to have, these I pray God to put in my heart; and which he has sometimes granted me."

There was a lull after the eventful 10th Thermidor —the calm after a devastating tempest. The apathy of the prisoners was animated by a faint, hardly breathed hope that perhaps the worst had passed. . . . The tyrant had fallen by the hands of the executioner; the massacres had ceased . . . but might begin at any moment. It was too soon to hope; still, they lived, they hoped. Mme. de Lafayette wrote to her son:

"*That the thought of following in footsteps so dear would have taken from the horror of so awful an end.*" She was so absorbed, so stunned by her grief, that she was utterly dead to the outside world. She lived, she moved, as one in a trance.

Toward the end of Fructidor, the Committee of General Safety, composed of Thermidoreans, deputed the Representatives Bourdon de l'Oise and Legendre to visit the prison of Le Plessis and decide the fate of the prisoners. All were set at liberty. On some one objecting that the Duchesse de Duras was an aristocrat and should not be given her freedom, Legendre declared that "she might well be an *Aristocrate*, after all she had suffered." She was thereupon dismissed with the rest of the prisoners. Mme. de Lafayette was the last. No one had the courage to say who she was, and she herself, with the pride she always displayed in pro-

nouncing the name of her husband, faced the committee, and to their questions replied that she was "La femme Lafayette." The *représentants* said that as her husband had so evidently betrayed his country, it was too grave a matter for them to decide her fate. She must send her papers to the committee. She begged the commission to undertake to carry these papers, for she had no one to whom she could intrust them.

"When you were surrounded by your aides-de-camp," said Legendre, "it was not thus you spoke; you were more insolent then."

So much absorbed had she been in her numbing grief that, since that fatal news, she had ceased to count time. She endured the fearful captivity to which she was subjected indifferently, not caring whether or not it was ended. She was too worn out to make an effort to better her condition. She concealed from her children the result of the visit of the committee, hoping to spare them anxiety until something definite was decided. She let them hope. She planned to leave France, taking them all with her as soon as she could procure her release. The newly appointed American minister, Mr. Monroe, tried, without success, to have this effected. Mme. Beauchet was indefatigable, and came to the prison every day; but the authorities were obdurate. Mr. Monroe and his wife came several times to the prison to see her; and, though unable to effect her release, cheered her with their society and conversation. As affairs assumed a more normal condition, the number of prisoners detained on suspicion decreased, and most of the temporary prisons were restored to their former functions. Le Plessis was appropriated to the use of receiving the accused awaiting trial. Indifferent to her fate, to her habitation, Mme. de Lafayette would not ask for a change of prisons, but she was sent first to the rue des Amandiers, and afterward to the Maison Delmas, in the rue Notre Dame des Champs. She had a strange experience in the house of the rue des Aman-

diers—street of the almond trees: what a name to conjure with!—being the only woman among twenty West Indian settlers, who, on her arrival, and during the first part of her stay, plainly showed the ill-will which they bore her on account of her well-known championship of the blacks. But, we are told, "they did not long resist the impression she always produced, and they left the prison professing the greatest admiration for her; it seemed as if her captivity had been prolonged that she might receive a tribute of praise from men of the most opposed, and even of the most critical parties." "Misery makes strange bedfellows," and the ever-changing occupants of that prison were a motley crowd. There were many friends of the odious and tyrannical government just fallen. There was the tutor of Saint-Just, who "spoke with much praise of his pupil"; then came the prosecutor of the Tribunal d'Orange, celebrated above all others for its atrocities; but, from all these persons, as it had been in the world outside, she received universal respect.

Physically she was most unhappy, and suffered greatly during the extremely severe winter of 1794–95. The prisoners all partook of their meals in a large barren hall, destitute of fire and comfort, and in their rooms fared little better, except that on account of their small size they were less draughty and cold. Everything in the room occupied by Mme. de Lafayette was frozen, and she, who had always been particularly sensitive to cold, suffered dreadfully. She passed four months in the Maison Delmas, rue Notre Dame des Champs, and received many visits from that good friend, the Abbé Carrichon, who told her of the last hours of those martyred women so dear to her. His presence brought her much comfort, and again she was able to receive the comforts of the Church. The abbé was obliged to represent himself as a carpenter, and come in the garb of that profession, with his tools, in order to obtain admission to the house.

Meanwhile every effort was being made to obtain her release. The American minister was unwearying in his exertions. Mme. Beauchet went continually to the *citoyen* Colombel, reporter of the committee, who found a fresh excuse for delay from day to day. The Duchesse de Duras went personally to see him. These persistent women had their reward. At last the committee, with the exception of Legendre, began to listen favourably. He was obdurate, and refused his signature, which was necessary to procure her freedom. At last Mme. de Duras went to see him during his toilette. She reminded him of her obligations toward him, saying that her cousin had undergone as many misfortunes, and suffered more than she herself, and that she should have the same rights. She refused to take "No" for an answer. She would not leave him until he agreed with her. Finally, he promised to oppose her wish no longer, and signed the order for her cousin's release. This eventful day was the 2d Pluviôse (January 22, 1795) sixteen long, dreary months since her first incarceration.

Think of a cold, crisp January day, when all Paris seemed to be abroad on errands of pleasure! How eagerly the prison-tired eyes of that weary woman roved to and fro in search of a familiar face, a time-hallowed landmark. How she listened to the well-known cries of the street vendors; and, must we write it? scanned the shop windows and the garments of the feminine portion of the population, for, even in revolutions and reigns of terror, fashions change, and the noblest must sometimes unbend! How good, how careless and happy, it all seemed to her who so short a while before had never hoped to see the clear sky or pass through those dear, crooked streets again except in that last ride in the tumbrel! She hastened at once to thank her friend, Mr. Monroe, for his many kindnesses, asking him to put her under even greater obligation by procuring a passport for herself and her family.

She would not go without her daughters, and her only hope was to take them to join their father. Before leaving France, probably for ever, she desired to make arrangements to send her son George to America. She dared not leave him in France, she could not take him to Germany in the midst of his father's enemies; America would be the best and wisest choice. As one returned from the grave she was treated and welcomed by her many relations. She had much pleasure and comfort in making a visit to her aunt, Mme. de Ségur, then living at Chantenay, not far from Paris, where she " found young Laure de Ségur in a terrible state of religious excitement," but with her sensible advice soothed and eased her mind, succeeding in calming the girl, " obtaining for her the comforts of religion for which she was longing," also setting the mind of Mme. de Ségur at rest about her child, whose condition had caused her grave anxiety of late.

In return for the good she did Laure, she received more than a reward from her mother. Mme. de Ségur was a woman of amiable, sweet disposition, of gentle manners which, even more than her lovely face and the cheerful calm of her home, served to soothe the storm-tossed wanderer, and make her for the time forget the awful happenings so lately passed. Her mind was reduced to comparative tranquillity by this visit, and she began to wake from the awful torpor which had stunned her since her mother's death. " My aunt has renewed in my blighted existence a great and tender interest," she wrote while there.

She still had great fears of involving others in her troubles, and would not allow her son to visit her at her aunt's, directing him to go to the house of two old Jansenist ladies, at Chilly, not far from Chantenay. Her devoted friend, Father Lambert, formerly of the order of the Dominicans, was concealed in this house. Six days after leaving her prison, she was able to embrace her dear son, who had obeyed his mother's sum-

mons without waiting for more than the necessary money to make the journey. "Greater even than the happiness of seeing him, was her pleasure in finding him so like what she had wished." At this moment she was happier than she had believed herself capable of being again in this life.

"I feel," she said, "a consolation so deep, so far greater than what I had expected, that I enjoy it more completely than any happiness which may yet be in store for me."

Each minute in Paris seemed an hour, for she longed to see the dear daughters from whom she had been so long separated, but she would not go from Paris until she had obtained the passports to enable her son to leave the country for America. She knew this would be her husband's desire, and great as must be her sorrow in parting from him, once there, under the protection of General Washington, he would be beyond further danger, and her mind relieved of one anxiety of the many. M. Ségur introduced her to Boissy d'Anglas, one of the most influential members of the newly formed Committee of Public Safety. He was also a most upright man, making it his object to do as much good as lay in his power, a sentiment vastly different from those professed and practiced by his predecessors in office. He procured a passport and made his colleagues sign it, without having the faintest idea as to the identity of the "*Citoyen* Motier." Another was procured for the faithful Frestel. In order to avoid any suspicion, George was to go to Havre in care of Mr. Russel, a citizen of Boston, and then embarking, await the arrival of M. Frestel, who was to follow with Mr. Russel's father. George's name and identity were to be kept a strict secret on board the vessel, and he was to obey the judgment of M. Frestel in everything. His mother did not wish him to be known in the United States until he had an older and wiser head to advise him. He was to put himself under the care of General

Washington as soon as possible. She wrote that illustrious man the following letter (this was in the spring of 1795):

"MONSIEUR: I send you my son. Although I have not had the consolation of being listened to or of obtaining from you those good offices which I thought likely to bring about his father's delivery from the hands of our enemies, because your views were different from mine, nevertheless my reliance on your kindness is not diminished, and it is with the deepest and most sincere confidence that I put my dear child under the protection of the United States, which he has ever been accustomed to look upon as his second country, and which I myself have always considered as being our future home under the special protection of their President, with whose feelings towards his father I am so well acquainted.

"The person who accompanies George has been since our misfortunes our support, our protector, our comfort, and my son's guide. My desire is that he should continue to direct him, that until his arrival my son should remain privately in M. Russel's house, that, once united, they should never separate, and that we may have some day the happiness of meeting all together in the land of Liberty. To the noble efforts of that friend, my children owe their father's life. Notwithstanding all the perils he encountered on his way, he made known to M. Morris the horrible situation I was in, and, after having the courage to traverse the whole of France in those times of horror, following a prisoner who was to all appearances devoted to death, he animated the zeal of the American Minister to whose applications I probably owe that my sacrifice was deferred until the revolution of the 10th of Thermidor. He will tell you that I have never given a pretext for any accusation against me; that my country can reproach me with nothing, and I myself will tell you that

it is near him and with him that my son invariably learnt, even in the depth of misery, to discern between Liberty and the horrors with which its name has been associated. While receiving from him each day the example of the most generous virtues his heart was being formed for those noble feelings which have preserved, and always will, I hope, preserve in his soul the love of a country where such dear victims have been sacrificed, where his father is disowned and persecuted, and where his mother was during sixteen months confined in prison. The last sacrifice which this friend has made for us is that of separating himself from a family he dearly loves. I ardently wish M. Washington to know what he is, and how much we are indebted to him. A letter will very insufficiently fulfil my object. When shall I be able to do so myself?

"My wish is that my son should lead a very secluded life in America, that he should resume his studies interrupted by three years of misfortunes, and that far from the land where so many events are taking place which might dishearten or revolt him, he may become fit to fulfil the duties of a citizen of the United States whose feelings will always agree with those of a French citizen.

"I shall not say anything here of my own position, nor of the one which interests me still more than mine. I rely on the bearer of this letter to interpret the feelings of my heart, too withered to express any others but those of the gratitude I owe MM. Monroe, Skypwith, and Mountflorence for their kindness and their useful endeavours in my behalf.

"I beg M. Washington will accept the assurances, etc. . . .

"Noailles-Lafayette."

Young George arrived without any unfortunate adventure, landing at Boston. While the news of his arrival in the United States was being conveyed to Gen-

eral Washington, the boy remained with friends, and one authority says attended school at Cambridge. Though a just man, General Washington was also a very deliberate thinker, and it was not until some time after the receipt of Mme. de Lafayette's letter that he had weighed the pros and cons of the case sufficiently to decide to take her son under his care. Once decided, the boy was soon sent for, finding a kind welcome and tender hearts awaiting him. To Washington, then past his youth, the sight of young Lafayette brought keenly to mind those days, nearly twenty years before, when the ardent young Frenchman had left wife, home, everything to bring that much-needed aid to him and those who fought in that cause. He would sometimes shake his head, scarcely realising that the son, whom he regarded as an infant, only lacked a few years of the age his father was when he had first known him. . . .

The celebrated architect, M. Latrobe, who visited Mount Vernon in July, 1798, describes the boy in the following words:

"Young Lafayette with his tutor came down some time before dinner. He is a young man of about seventeen, of a mild pleasing countenance, favourably impressing at first sight. His figure is rather awkward. His manners are easy, and he has very little of the usual French air about him. He talked much, especially with Miss Custis, and seemed to possess wit and fluency. He spoke English tolerably well; much better, indeed, than his tutor, who had had the same opportunities of improvement." M. Latrobe speaks of General Washington, "as treating young Lafayette as a child rather than a guest," and he doubtless led a healthy and happy life amid the peaceful beauties of Mount Vernon. His mother would have suffered less at the separation of sending the scarce fifteen-year-old boy more than a thousand leagues from her, had she been able to see across the chasm of distance, those affectionate friends who strove to console him for his

exile. But she had the most powerful consolation possible to offer her—the knowledge that such would have been her husband's wish.

Having safely started the boy and received the news of his sailing, there was nothing to detain her at Paris. Adrienne could not, would not, wait any longer, and travelled post to Auvergne, where she intended to remain a week. Her daughters came as far as Vaire, that picturesque village about three leagues from Clermont, to meet her whom they had so long despaired of ever seeing again in this world. The meeting must be imagined. It could not be painted, unless

> To mortal it were given,
> To dip his brush in dyes of Heaven. . . .

In the words of her daughter: "You may fancy the ecstasy of our joy on seeing her. She was kind enough to partake in it herself so as to give us the hope that her happiness was greater than we could have dared to expect."

On the following day—Sunday—the happily reunited mother and daughters went to church, as, in a very few places the practice and rites of religion were, though slowly and timidly, being resumed. The service was at the tiny hamlet of Montout, nearly a league from Vaire, nestled in the mountains. Next day they resumed the journey to Chavinac. Though devoted to her children, and welcomed with the most extreme manifestations of joy by her aunt, "whose side she was hardly allowed to leave," so greatly had the old lady felt the pain of separation, and so apprehensive was she of its renewal, Mme. de Lafayette's chief aim and object was as yet unaccomplished. Her husband was still a prisoner. It required great courage to again, so soon, separate herself from her family; it seemed selfish to bid another farewell to that aged relative, to whom there was so little joy left. But what she contemplated required all her resources and energy; her impatient

spirit would not be delayed in the accomplishment of the desire which was paramount. She started, and on the way, almost at once, had a joyful and utterly unexpected meeting with her sister, Mme. de Grammont. This excellent lady's means were so reduced by the Revolution that she had not enough money to travel post, and would not go in the public conveyances for fear she would find herself in company with some of the abhorred Terrorists. She had been to Paris on foot with her husband in the hope of meeting some one, or learning the whereabouts of her long-lost sister, who all the family had counted with the dead. They had walked from Franche-Comté, and not finding her at Paris, were on the way to Auvergne. This meeting took place near Brioude, the scene of so many eventful happenings, and in some way may have served to dispel the miserable memories connected with the place. The cabriolet in which Mme. de Lafayette was travelling was going rather slowly, and pulled aside to avoid passing too near two persons who were walking. They glanced up, as people do on unfrequented country roads; the woman who was walking rubbed her eyes, looked again at the languid passenger in the shabby vehicle. An exclamation which she made caused the other to observe her more closely, and one second later, with a heartfelt cry of joy, the sisters were locked in one another's arms. They could hardly believe it was not all a dream, and engaged in such earnest and vehement conversation that it was only after the thrice repeated suggestion of M. de Grammont that they could continue their conversation and the journey at the same time by getting into the cabriolet, they were finally persuaded to start, travelling the rest of the time together, sometimes walking to rest themselves, but mostly driving.

They arrived in the height of the stirring events of the 1st Prairial (1795). Paris was in such a turmoil that there was not much chance to look into or arrange

private affairs. In the event of the Jacobins becoming all powerful, Mme. de Lafayette had fully decided to emigrate; otherwise she would leave no stone unturned to get her passport. In this way she would have done everything for the preservation of the property which still remained to her. For three weeks they awaited the result of the stormy contest taking place daily. They lived at Clermont, and Mme. de Lafayette occupied herself in preparing her daughter Virginie for her first communion. They finally returned to Paris, having some slight hope of gaining what they wished. Owing to the firm and skilful manner in which Boissy d'Anglas had saved his country from another reign of Terror, he had acquired much influence among his contemporaries. Mme. de Ségur wisely took this into consideration when applying to him to further the requests of Mme. de Lafayette. However, it was a slow and tedious affair, and before receiving the much-wished-for passport she had ample time to arrange her family matters. Taking advantage of the law which had restored the property of those condemned to the guillotine to their families, she took possession for herself and her joint heirs, of the estate which had been her mother's. Despite the scarcity of money, taking upon herself the charitable bequests of Mme. d'Ayen's will, arranging the financial affairs of Mme. de Chavinac, who had recently been able to purchase Chavinac from those who bought it when it was disposed of by the committee. M. de Grammont sold some of the jewellery belonging to his wife, so that they were able to pay the necessary amounts at once. Mme. de Lafayette at the same time provided for the numerous old retainers of the Noailles family, who had been almost, without exception, faithful, and for all those dependent upon her.

Though compelled to go frequently to Paris, on journeys necessitated by business details, she invariably walked the distance from Fontenay, enjoying the exercise and motion, even the sight of the blue sky,

after her many months in prison. Her health was good, her hopes high, and she felt no fatigue. Mme. de Lafayette passed many hours in fervent prayer, revisiting those churches and oratories where so many victims of the Terror had prayed before being seized and slaughtered. They were all filled with terrible sadness for her; she would weep sorely as some vivid recollection of the past came suddenly, all heightened tenfold by the cruel fact that once happy and dear friends were no more. The visits to Saint-Roch were the most cruel of all. There she had prayed as a child, worshipped as a wife, seen the marriage of dear sisters, knelt side by side with that pious mother . . . all was changed. Harrowing as these reminiscences were, they did her good. The floods of tears relaxed and soothed her overstrained nerves from the burden of the past few years. Though ever an exceptionally devout woman, there is no period of her life when she gave as much time, or followed as assiduously, the duties and offices of her religion. She was absolutely her own mistress, owed no obligations to society; her friends were all scattered to the four winds, so she found her comfort and solace in the mysterious, stately churches, where the incense was again beginning to rise to heaven from the defaced altars, and the solemn tones of the mass called together those who had survived the blasphemous Terror. . . .

At last came the end of the weary waiting. She received the passports. For the first time since the final separation from her husband she was happy; happy in the knowledge that now she was free to join him; if not that, she was free to make the attempt. She had overcome obstacles hitherto unsurmountable, so with a light heart she prepared to start on her journey. All her affairs had been arranged—everything provided for—she left Paris gaily.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE passport was for America. It would have been impossible to have procured one for Germany, and once safely started, it was easy to change the destination. On September 5, 1795, they embarked on a small American vessel, sailing from Dunkirk for Hamburg; landing after a voyage of eight days at Altona, near Hamburg. Mme. de Lafayette's sister, Mme. de Montagu, was living there with their aunt, Mme. de Tessé. The latter, having been informed of the arrival of the Lafayette family, flew headlong to the inn, where she arrived just as the travellers were entering. Mme. de Montagu's friends tried to break the unexpected and delightful news, and prepare her for the meeting; but she could heed nothing, and the violence of her emotion on seeing that adored sister was fearful . . . that they should meet again after the agonising sufferings of separation! It was a great sorrow, mingled with joy, to talk over all the events which had filled those eventful years since they had met; it consoled them to mingle their tears and pray for those they mourned, the very misery of their memories affording them comfort.

The many *émigrés* living at Altona and Hamburg came to see the new arrivals, who were able to tell them much about their families and about the condition of France and home affairs. Others came, too, led by a natural curiosity to see those whom misfortune had singled for her own. Mme. de Lafayette bore no resentment against the *émigrés*, though their actions toward her husband had not been prompted by friend-

ship. She was an extraordinary woman. "It is inconceivable to have loved so much, and never to have felt in any circumstances the slightest bitterness of feeling against those who calumniated and persecuted the object of all her affections. She viewed the conduct of those who had wronged her with indulgent impartiality, and in the course of her troubled life, this disposition never altered." Still with her unchangeable, unaccomplished purpose in view, she made but a short stay at Altona. She had experienced much joy in the society of her sister and aunt, but her heart lay in that gloomy dungeon, and, like the heart of Bruce, which his faithful follower had thrown before him into the midst of battle, and fought Paynim hosts to regain, she must strive until she was victorious.

Having obtained her passport from Mr. Parish, the American consul at Hamburg, she was ready to start, travelling under the name of Motier, citizen of Hartford, Conn., as this was one of the States in which General Lafayette and his family were naturalised. They were obliged to travel with a servant who spoke German, as it was not alone necessary that they should travel without a suspicion of their identity becoming known, but also concealing their nationality, as at that time no French man or woman was allowed to enter Austria. They arrived at Vienna, bearing letters to M. de Cobentzel's sister, the Comtesse de Rumbeck. This lady received Mme. de Lafayette with great pleasure, giving her a warm welcome, proving the "excellence of her heart and amiable disposition" by the way in which she made herself of use to one who was a stranger in all but name. Mme. de Rumbeck advised her visitor to address the old Prince de Rosemberg, Grand Chamberlain, who had formerly known members of her family, particularly her uncle, long ambassador to the court of Vienna. This Mme. de Lafayette did, meeting him under her assumed name of Motier, and telling him later who she really was. Much moved

by her story, he was able by his position in the royal household to obtain for her an interview with the emperor, and this, unknown to any of the ministers, he did. Accompanied by her daughters she saw the emperor, who received her with much politeness. She merely made a request to share her husband's captivity. The emperor replied:

"I grant it to you. As for his liberty, that would be impossible—my hands are tied."

She thanked him for the favour she had just received, and said that "the wives of her husband's friends, imprisoned with him at Olmütz, would envy her happiness."

The emperor replied: "They have only to act like you. I shall do the same for them."

Mme. de Lafayette then said that she "had heard of several vexations in the Prussian prisons, and she begged the emperor to allow her to address herself directly to him for any requests she might have to make."

He answered: "I consent. But you will find M. de Lafayette well treated. I hope you will do me justice. Your presence will give him fresh satisfaction. Anyhow, you will be pleased with the commanding officer. In gaol the prisoners are only distinguished by their numbers, but as for your husband, his name is well known."

Almost delirious with the joyful thought that at last she would soon be reunited to her imprisoned husband, she left the audience chamber and prayed devoutly that night for the emperor who had granted her this great boon. As the order admitting her to the prison had to be sent to Olmütz and acknowledged, there must necessarily be some delay, and she passed the intervening eight days in visiting Mme. de Windischgrätz and Mme. d'Ursel, both relations of Mme. Auguste d'Aremberg (the Comtesse de la Marck who then bore that name) and the dearest friend she had outside the family. Mme. de Lafayette was over-

whelmed with kindness by these two ladies, and often reproached herself, Heaven knows why! "of thinking only of her own happiness, and not working in view of her husband's liberation." In consequence, she called upon M. de Thugut, the prime minister. During and after this interview her heart re-echoed the gratitude she felt toward M. de Rosemberg for the interview which he had arranged on his sole responsibility. She was received politely by M. de Thugut, but there was a feeling of constraint throughout the conversation. All his diplomatic powers of dissembling could not conceal the fact that he hated the prisoner at Olmütz. It was at this time that the exchange of the Duchesse d'Angoulême for the Conventionelles Deputies, captured by the Austrians, was effected. Mme. de Lafayette did not suggest the inconsistency of detaining captive one who had been proscribed for defending Louis XVI, while setting free those who had voted his death. She would have considered it un-Christian to say a disparaging word of a prisoner. The audience with the prime minister was not successful, and quite unimportant in its results.

Finally, the permission she had so long desired, hoped, and wished for, the order, admitting her into the prison of Olmütz, was delivered into her hands by M. de Ferraris, minister of war. He was a man in whose composition there were no Utopian dreams, and he strongly advised her to desist from her present course. The prison life would be hard and confining, and might have serious consequences for herself and her daughters. He meant the advice kindly; more probably wished the prisoner to remain in uncheered solitude. Mme. de Lafayette did not even listen to him. She had waited years for this moment, and as the time for seeing her husband grew shorter, the very minutes were as hours. . . . She started immediately, on October 1, 1795. The journey being bare of incident, the only *contretemps*, an accident to their travel-

ling carriage, which made it necessary to finish the last day in one of the open vehicles of the country, found at every post-house. They arrived at Olmütz on the second day after leaving Vienna. With what mingled emotions they beheld the pointed steeples of the town, shown to them by the post-boy, would be hard—nay, impossible—to explain. Mme. de Lafayette's emotions almost overcame her; she was choked by her tears. As soon as she recovered herself she thanked God in the well-known words of Tobit's prayer beginning: "Blessed be the God that liveth forever, and blessed be his Kingdom." At eleven o'clock they entered Olmütz, driving at once to the house occupied by the commander of the town. They did not meet him personally, but he sent the officer in charge of the prison to conduct them. Mme. de Lafayette's own words, on the eve of the eventful day of meeting were, "I cannot fancy how one can go through what is awaiting us tomorrow," but joy seldom kills.

They were admitted through the first door, which was locked even on the guard. They passed through long, gloomy stone passages, a veritable labyrinth of seeming catacombs . . . then . . . came the last locked door. . . .

Picture to yourself an ambitious man who had been confined for years, who knew not what had happened in the country which he loved so well, was ignorant if his dear ones lived or had died . . . who could see no hope of his liberation, no hope anywhere, sitting sadly, head on hand, and, hearing the creak of the heavy iron locks, the harsh rasping of the door, opening on its unwilling hinges, awakened from his revery by the noise at this unusual hour, looking up languidly with a glance of silent inquiry . . . to behold his wife and daughters. . . .

"Judge," wrote Mme. de Lafayette, "what must have been the sensations of M. de Lafayette, from whom had been kept the tidings if we still existed,

when, without a preparation, he saw us enter his room."

There was much to tell. Of the three years of captivity, one having been spent in complete solitude, even the attentions of his servant being denied him, for, since the unsuccessful attempt at escape, the prisoner had been treated with unwarrantable severity. He was greatly changed in appearance, as a man must be who had passed three years in such fearful and constant anxiety, without the slightest news from the outside world. Added to this was the terrible cells in which he had been lodged. He longed to make a thousand inquiries of his wife, but hesitated, for fear of the answers he might receive, and because he saw the terrible state of excitement under which she laboured. He asked no questions, and the day passed happily in the mere joy of being once more reunited after those many bitter hours when the heart of each despaired ever meeting till the far-off day of resurrection. It was in the quiet night, after the devoted daughters had been locked in the adjoining, but not communicating room, that she told her husband, with tears and the dry sobs of that grief which is beyond expression, the details of her mother's death, of the tragic fate of her sister and grandmother. The heart of the patriot exiled Frenchman bled at the recital of the excesses, the enormities of the crimes of his countrymen. He was loyal to *la belle France*, but those monsters who had made her name a synonym for wanton slaughter his arm could not have been too ready to strike down, while cursing them for the disgrace they had brought upon their country in the name of *Liberté*. During his captivity Lafayette had suffered much, and the general debility of his appearance very forcibly struck his wife and daughters, who had parted from him when he was in good health. He had been through one very dangerous illness while imprisoned at Wesel, and so inhumanly was he treated that his lifelong friend and

fellow prisoner, M. de Maubourg, could not obtain permission to see him. The King of Prussia, thinking to tempt Lafayette, offered some privileges which would have greatly bettered his condition, in return for plans which he could furnish against France, but the general replied in such terms of impassioned contempt to the proposition that he was henceforth treated with even greater rigour than formerly. This was before he was confined at Olmütz. After being captured by the Austrians they—Lafayette, Maubourg, and Pusy —were first sent to Wesel. In a letter from Lafayette, written later, he said: "It is unknown what sufferings have been inflicted on us by the Coalition, but what are these sufferings to the pain a heart devoted to liberty feels from the injustice on the people."

By the study of historical events in the last several hundred—or thousands—of years, the fact is very strongly suggested to the cynically minded that the patriot is appreciated almost less than any other class of man. He is used as a sort of leaven to raise the bread of benefit for his fellow-man; and this having been accomplished, is usually left in the rush of anarchy which follows, to shift for himself, and, as he is not of the class to whom political upheaval brings riches, he has the pleasure of surveying from a solitary eminence the havoc which his wrongly applied doctrines have wrought, and to console himself with the knowledge that his all is gone; or, failing this, exile and the scaffold when his ideas are too scrupulous to be dealt with in any less convincing manner. Soon after this event they were removed to Magdebourg, all information in reference to their families, or on any subject, being refused them. On account of the proscriptions taking place in France, their anxiety was terrible. They were, in all but the physical fact, dead men. The year at Magdebourg was passed in a damp, dark, unhealthy dungeon, surrounded by high palisades and closed by a succession of four heavy gates, fastened

with bolts and iron chains. By a sudden and unexplained order from the King of Prussia, Lafayette was sent to Niess. The request of Latour-Maubourg to be sent there also was not granted. He was sent to Gratz, where shortly after Bureaux de Pusy joined him. The friends were thus scattered, and not again imprisoned together until the frowning walls of Olmütz engulfed them all. This was consequent of the peace between the King of Prussia and the French Republic. The former being unwilling that the peace which he was forced to conclude with France should oblige him to release those unfortunate men, promptly gave them to the Austrians, who, with equal celerity, put them in Olmütz. Naturally, they could not expect good treatment from that country; they were Frenchmen, and Frenchmen had murdered the daughter of Maria Theresa, the descendant of the Cæsars, the aunt of the present king.

On transferring them to their separate cells, it was declared to each, that "*they would never for the future see more than the four surrounding walls; they would receive no information about things or persons; that their gaolers were prohibited from pronouncing their names, and that in the government dispatches they would be referred to merely by their numbers; that they would never have the satisfaction of knowing of their families or their reciprocal existence; and that as such a situation naturally incited suicide, knives, forks, and every means of destruction were to be withheld from them.*"

It took the certificates of three physicians to gain Lafayette the privilege, or, as they stated, the vital necessity, of breathing a little pure air, for his dungeon was dank and foul. The authorities declared each time that he was not yet so very ill, but finally he was granted permission for a short walk, being closely watched all the time. In 1793 that tireless friend, Count Lally-Tollendal, while in London, en-

gaged one Dr. Bollman, a Hanoverian of great courage and unceasing perseverance, to effect the escape of M. de Lafayette. This Dr. Bollman had before arranged the means of rescuing Count Narbonne—that nobleman having been proscribed, and only saved through the aid of Mme. de Staël, under whose directions Bollman acted. He very cleverly succeeded in getting the count out of France, conducting him to England.

It took a long time for Bollman to find out definitely where Lafayette was actually imprisoned, and only after the most minute inquiries did he learn that he and his fellow prisoners had been delivered to the Austrian authorities. With this meagre knowledge he returned to London. He was sent over again, in June, 1794, to ascertain if Lafayette was living, and if so to effect his escape. With great difficulty Bollman succeeded in tracing the prisoners to the Prussian frontier; and, when almost in despair and at his wit's end, happened to find that they had been removed by an Austrian escort, which took the road leading to Olmütz. Going there, Bollman learned, through the gossip of the village, that there were state prisoners in the castle, guarded with an elaborate mystery which would have made the Man in the Iron Mask look to his laurels had that worthy been still living. Having fully satisfied himself as to the identity of the prisoners, Bollman went to Vienna, there mixing much in society, particularly that of young Americans, finally finding one courageous dashing spirit to join him in the hazardous enterprise.

Francis Huger was the son of Colonel Huger, of Charlestown, S. C., who had welcomed Lafayette on that stormy night when the gallant noble for the first time set foot upon the shores of America. The tempestuous winds and high-running seas had driven the vessel of the adventurous Frenchman to seek shelter in a small bay; and, with his crew scattered to seek assistance, the marquis had himself done likewise, for-

tune leading his steps to this hospitable door. He formed a friendship with Colonel Huger which lasted until the early death of the latter. Though a child of four at the time, the events of that evening had always been, from constant and repeated telling, deeply imprinted on young Huger's mind, and he eagerly jumped at the opportunity of helping liberate one of whom his father had thought so highly. The Austrian authorities were so terribly vigilant that it was necessary to use the utmost caution in their proceedings. They purchased three of the finest horses to be found, and with one servant, started on a tour, Huger taking the part of an invalid, and Bollman the physician in attendance, travelling to look after his health. After roving several weeks in the aimless manner peculiar to the whims of an invalid, they finally, as if by chance, arrived at Olmütz. Once there, they went on a sightseeing walk through the town, including the fortifications of the castle, where they entered into conversation with the gaoler, arranging with him that they should be allowed to see the interior the next day, which they did, frequently repeating the visits, until their appearance ceased to be of interest. They became very friendly after many conversations with the gaoler, carelessly asking him about the prisoners who were in his charge, not betraying the slightest surprise or any symptoms of consciousness when he mentioned, among others, the name of Lafayette. The man volunteered some details of his confinement, mentioning the fact that he was allowed to have books. This was the opening they had long desired, but they merely mentioned, most casually, that they had some few papers and periodicals which, as travellers, they had no desire to keep; perhaps they might be of some amusement to the prisoner? The gaoler saw no objections, if the books were sent open to his inspection. That evening they sent the books, also a note, written in French, apologising for the liberty they were taking; begging

him to read the books they sent, and if his attention or fancy was particularly drawn to any passage, that he would let them know his opinion. The gaoler could not understand French, but could see no harm in a note which he was allowed to read. The prisoner received his book.

After scanning this most unexpected communication, Lafayette quickly took up the book, reading it carefully, to find here and there words written lightly in pencil. These being put together, made him cognisant of what was now being done for his liberation; and, that they should know his sentiments in the matter, before going further in their plan of rescue, he replied in an open note, thanking them for their kindness, and adding that he was much charmed with the book and approved greatly of its contents. This was the first of many innocent missives which were permitted to go to and fro, even after the gaoler had shown them to persons who could read. Thus wedge after wedge was driven in, the final details of the plan being written in lime juice on the back of a note of inquiry for Lafayette's health, which concluded with these words: "Quand vous aurez lu ce billet, mettez la *au feu*," instead of "*dans le feu*." By holding the paper to the fire he was able to learn all his friends had planned.

The long-projected escape was to be carried into effect the following day. Olmütz is situated in the midst of a plain, being bounded by some rising ground and a few shrubs, but so open that the sentry on the castle walls was able to command a view of the country for miles in every direction. This made the attempt doubly difficult. Lafayette, upon the plea that his health was not good and required more air, which was, Heaven knows, true! had obtained permission to drive every day, in an open cabriolet, accompanied by an officer, an armed soldier being on the box for greater safety. Lafayette and the officer, whose confidence he

had gained, often used to leave the carriage and walk about the plain. On the day which was to be that of the rescue, Bollman and his companion, riding leisurely along, saw the cabriolet with the prisoner and the officer drive out on to the plain, where, according to custom, they walked to and fro, arm in arm. They then seemed to be absorbed in earnest conversation about the officer's sword, which he had in his hand. Considering this a favourable moment, Bollman and Huger put spurs to their horses and galloped up. On hearing them the officer immediately tried to pull Lafayette into the cabriolet, and get his sword away from him. The struggle was so severe that Lafayette received a serious strain, and also had the flesh torn from one hand down to the bone.

Huger came up at this moment. "Seize the horse, and fortune be our guide!" he cried. Alas! even as he spoke the sun, flashing on the sword, alarmed the already excited horse, who reared, broke his bridle, and tore madly over the plain. Bollman rode in fruitless pursuit. Huger, with a gallantry and generosity "seldom equalled, but never excelled," forced Lafayette to take his horse and make all speed to the *rendezvous*.

"Lose no time, the alarm has been given, the peasants are assembling—save yourself!"

With a hasty word of thanks, he was on the horse and off. Dr. Bollman, giving up further pursuit of the runaway, returned, pulling Huger up behind him, and galloped away. But the horse, not being equal to the double burden, stumbled and fell. Almost stunned and severely bruised, for they had been riding at breakneck speed, Huger made Bollman mount again, begging him to follow and assist Lafayette, which he could not do if they both attempted to ride; while he, being a good runner, could easily hide in the woody country near by. It was with the utmost reluctance that Bollman consented. There was no time for

delay, as the soldiers and peasants were almost upon them. Though a wonderfully swift runner, Huger was—or allowed himself finally to be—caught, hoping thereby to distract his pursuers from Lafayette.

Meanwhile Lafayette galloped swiftly along, the pain from his torn and lacerated hand unheeded. He was exhilarated by the fresh air and rapid motion, the thought that he was again free. About ten miles from Olmütz, at a small town, the road divided; the right led to Trappaw, he unfortunately took the left. Hardly had he passed a mile beyond the town than he noticed that the road led too much to the left. Suspecting that he had taken the wrong turning, he inquired of a peasant whom he met on the road to Beautroppe. This man, noticing his foreign accent, the disorder of his dress, and the state of his horse, suspected that he was a prisoner making his escape, and purposely directed him to take a road which, by a *détour*, led back to the town. This man then ran across the country, and when Lafayette arrived at the town, from where he expected to start anew, he was surrounded by throngs of excited peasants, who insisted that he should go before the magistrate. His answers to that dignitary were so calm and collected that he was puzzled. Lafayette said he was an officer of excise, belonging to Trappaw, who had friends in Olmütz, where he had been visiting. Having been detained there by indisposition, he was obliged to hurry back, as he was afraid his absence from Trappaw would be noticed, and he would lose his place. So simple was the story, and so earnest the manner of the supposed officer that the balance of justice had begun to decline, when a young man entered with some papers for which he required the magistrate's signature. While this was being written, the newcomer looked intently at Lafayette, and when the magistrate laid down his quill and scattered the drying sand over the writing, stooped and whispered a few words in his ear. The representative of local jus-

tice sat up as if he had heard an unusually loud clap of thunder.

"Who do you say he is?"

"The General Lafayette"—proud of the sensation he was making.

"How do you know him?" persisted justice, ever cautious.

"I was present when the general was delivered by the Prussians to the Austrians. He is the man. I cannot be mistaken."

Pale at the thought that he might have let one so illustrious slip through his fingers, the magistrate refused to listen to Lafayette's entreaties or protestations. He was sent to Olmütz under close guard and once more imprisoned in that miserable dungeon. The daring Bollman, finding all was lost, finally gave himself up, and was, with Huger, imprisoned for many a weary month. After a farcical trial, they managed to secure pardon by long and tedious negotiations, paying the magistrate "fifty pieces," the money being supplied by a generous Russian nobleman living in the vicinity. This being arranged successfully, the impartial and incorruptible (?) judge first fixed the period of their imprisonment at fourteen years, then seven, soon after shortened to one—as the injustice of their detention appealed to his legal mind—to a month, to a week, after which they were released.

The reason for the extreme harshness which the Austrian Government showed toward the daring adventurers lay in the fact that they believed the release of Lafayette to be a deep-laid plot on the part of the other powers, as they could not conceive how two men could have the courage, the intrepidity, to attempt, alone and almost unarmed, such a rescue. So much for Austrian justice!

CHAPTER XIX

THE life of those courageous women who had chosen to share the lot of their husband and father was one of the greatest hardships and privations, of total isolation from the rest of the world. On entering the prison, the authorities asked for their purses, their luggage was searched, and three silver forks found there confiscated, which obliged them for the whole time they remained in prison to eat with their fingers, the use of knives and forks being strictly forbidden. They were not allowed to have a woman to do the commonest and most menial work, and the ordinary duties of the household had to be performed by Mme. de Lafayette and her uncomplaining daughters. The doors of the prison opened only to admit the officer on his visits of inspection, and to allow the entrance of the soldiers bearing their meals.

The *appartement* occupied by M. de Lafayette was in what had formerly been the convent barracks of the Jesuits. His rooms were on the ground floor, and had a good view, giving on a high rampart looking south. He was allowed two rooms—one vaulted, twelve feet high and twenty-four feet long, by sixteen wide, opened into a similar room used as an ante-chamber. These were lighted by a window, eight by four, one in either *appartement*, and which were covered by massive iron gratings to prevent escape. The upper part of the window was closed, and fastened with a heavy iron padlock, but the lower half could be opened for air at will. What made these rooms so painfully

unbearable was the fact that all the sewers from the citadel drained into the moat, which was shallow, sometimes dry, and every change of air brought with it fearful odours. It was so offensive that the guards who brought food to the prisoners were obliged to hold their noses when they entered the room, but no one thought of the poor prisoners. The furniture consisted of a bed, which was Lafayette's own property, a table, some chairs, a chest of drawers, and a stove. Mme. de Lafayette and her daughters were allowed but one room, the sisters being forced to sleep together; even when one of them became very ill, the authorities refused the request for another bed. One would think that a sense of shame might have induced those in power to treat with some decency, or even common humanity, those women, who were neither prisoners nor malefactors. MM. Maubourg and de Pusy were lodged similarly to their friend; and the servants had rooms no better, no worse, but with less furniture. After Lafayette's attempt to escape, he was not permitted to have his servant in attendance, and he and his family were waited upon by the soldiers. His friends fared better. Latour-Maubourg had his servant for two hours daily. M. de Pusy, for some reason, was not allowed his for nearly two months at the beginning of his imprisonment. For the last twenty-one months he was allowed to see him for three hours a day. Their food, *which they paid for themselves*, was in sufficient quantities, and not always unappetising, though as it came from the canteen of a very dirty *vivandier* just outside the fortress, it was far from being tempting to the prisoners. In fact, they " found it generally strongly tinged with the flavour of tobacco, and were lucky indeed if they did not find large pieces of the weed in the dishes themselves! " The dishes were so dirty that they could scarcely bring themselves to eat. " For breakfast they had coffee or chocolate, as desired. For dinner, soup, boiled beef, a *ragôut* or vegetables,

roast meat, *salade*, dessert, and a bottle of red Hungarian wine. At supper they had a roast meat, *salade*, and a half bottle of wine. The attendance of the military surgeon was theirs in case of need, and what medicaments could be given them within the limits of their rooms was allowed. That was all."

The oft-repeated and simple request of Mme. de Lafayette to the authorities was refused. Her greatest deprivation was in not being allowed to hear Mass, though the church adjoined the prison, and she could have been well guarded. So deep were her feelings at the refusal of this last—and most reasonable—request, that she wrote to the Minister of War, M. de Ferraris, with whom she had a slight acquaintance, having met him at his sisters', Mesdames de Windischgrätz and d'Ursel, whom she visited at Vienna.

December 14, 1795.

"The Major, having for the second time brought me pen and ink, the first to answer my father, the second my aunt and sisters, whose letters have at last been delivered to me, I think it my duty, M. le Comte, to take this opportunity of renewing a request made three days after my arrival—viz., leave to attend Mass with my daughters. It had never appeared to me that this request could be thought unreasonable, but you would give me great pleasure by sending a favourable answer before Christmas. You will have been, I suppose, solicited to grant us leave to see our two friends by Mme. Windischgrätz, to whom, according to my promise, I wrote the first time I was provided with the means of doing so. This is also a question of the deepest interest to me. How much could I say were I to speak of my too well founded anxieties with respect to M. de Lafayette's health! But the hope of soon seeing him free, for freedom would be the best remedy, makes me defer dwelling long on that subject.

"Pardon my importunity, and receive, M. le Comte, etc. . . .

"NOAILLES-LAFAYETTE."

She received, almost immediately, the following answer:

"MADAME LA MARQUISE: I have this moment received the letter you did me the honour of writing to me on the fourteenth of the month. I am utterly unaware to whom you addressed the request to hear Mass at Olmütz. I have not myself the means of complying with your desire, notwithstanding my desire to do so. I can only observe that, as you consented to share your husband's lot, it will not be possible for you to obtain any change in your situation.

"Receive, Madame la Marquise, the assurances of the respectful feelings," etc. . . .

With her usual intrepidity she did not allow the matter to rest here, again writing to the Minister of War:

"I have the honour to thank you, M. le Comte, for your civility in answering my letter as soon as it was allowed to reach you. I am also very grateful for the regret you express for not being able to grant my requests. I made them to the Commander at Olmütz, because his Imperial Majesty told me that it was to him I was to apply. I had to put them in writing, having no means of seeing him. I asked 1st: to go to Mass, for it is my duty to do all that lies in my power to attend divine service on Sundays and holy days; 2nd, to be waited upon by a servant, for I heard at Vienna that the members of the Convention who had been delivered up to you, when they had servants were allowed to see them here all day long, and I flattered myself that the same favour might be granted to me at least for some moments; 3rd, I had also asked that

MM. Pusy and Latour-Maubourg might pass some hours with us, because in the various French prisons where, as you know, I was confined during sixteen months, I had been in the habit of seeing the prisoners communicate with each other. Excuse me, M. le Comte, for having expected so much.

" I acknowledge with the greatest pleasure, that we are bound to share all the hardships of M. de Lafayette's captivity, and that was the only favour we solicited. Our feelings are not changed, and we all three repeat with all our heart that we are happier with M. de Lafayette even in this prison, than anywhere else without him. But to justify the liberty I have taken, I will remind you, M. le Comte, that his Imperial Majesty, in the audience he granted me, had the kindness to tell me *that I should find M. de Lafayette well treated, and that, in case I should have any request to make, I should be satisfied with the Commander.*

" I shall also have the honour to remind you that his Majesty had allowed me to write directly to him by addressing my letters to the Prince de Rosemberg. As since we have been confined here, it has been impossible for me to find the means of doing so, I thought myself authorised to forward to you my requests, and I beg you will excuse me if you have found them unreasonable. Would you kindly give a thousand tender compliments to Mmes. Windischgrätz and d'Ursel? Tell them that my daughters' health, notwithstanding the want of air and exercise, is pretty good. My own is in a bad state, and if the refusal of such simple requests as those I have already made did not disgust me from making fresh ones, I should think it my duty, M. le Comte, to ask for permission for the necessary passports to go for eight or ten days to Vienna, leaving my daughters with their father, in order to consult on my case doctors who would certainly tell you that such a request is not out of season. If you think it is in your power to give me a favourable answer, I shall

be most obliged to you. But whatever may be the state of my health, I should wish not to have much more alarming anxieties for the prisoner whom we are so happy to have joined at last.

"Receive, M. le Comte," etc. . . .

M. de Ferraris's Reply.

January 26, 1796.

"I am most flattered, Mme. la Marquise, that you have been satisfied with my wish to oblige you. I cannot go further in the desire I shall always have to give you proofs of my respect. . . . Neither the Council of War nor myself can grant the requests of State prisoners. We have no other office than to see that they are watched according to His Imperial Majesty's orders. It is therefore to that monarch you must address yourself since he has deigned to permit you to do so.

"I beg you will receive, Mme. la Marquise," etc. . . .

Viewing these matters with an impartial eye, after this lapse of time, it is inconceivable why such harsh treatment was inflicted on a woman and her daughters, merely because they were brave and steadfast enough to share the captivity of one they loved. They were not political prisoners, they were guilty of no crime in the eye of any law. It is unlikely that the governor of Olmütz or the emperor had any special personal enmity against them, though, this being the case, why did they not alleviate the rigour of the treatment when requested to do so by Mme. de Lafayette? All through the imprisonment of Lafayette there seems to have been some secret foe at work. It was not England. There were too many admirers of the gallant Frenchman, once fighting with the foe of England in that war where so many Englishmen questioned the judgment of their sovereign. There were uplifted voices which rang in praise

of "that heart which never for a moment ceased to glow with a sacred fire of the purest and most religious patriotism." America, in the person of her representatives, tried repeatedly to rescue him, the American ministers at all foreign courts having instructions to use every available opportunity to intercede for his release.

The envoy at the court of Saint James worked tirelessly. Lafayette's old friend and admirer, Count Lally-Tollendal, who had been a member of the National Assembly while his friend sat there, left no stone unturned. George Washington, then President of the United States, addressed a private letter to the Emperor of Austria, requesting that he should be liberated and allowed to come to the United States.

"It will readily occur to Your Majesty," he wrote, "that occasions may sometimes exist on which official considerations would constrain the chief of a Nation to be silent and passive in relation even to objects which affect his sensibility, and claim his interposition as a man. Finding myself precisely in this situation at the present, I have taken the liberty of writing this private letter to Your Majesty, being persuaded that my motives will also be my apology for it.

"In common with the people of this country, I retain a strong and cordial sense of the services rendered to them by the Marquis de Lafayette, and my friendship for him has been constant and sincere. It is natural, therefore, that I should sympathise with him and his family in their misfortunes, and endeavour to mitigate the calamities they experience, among which his present confinement is not the least distressing.

"I forbear to enlarge on this delicate subject. Permit me only to submit to Your Majesty's consideration whether the long imprisonment and the confiscation of his estate, and the indigence and indisposition of his family, and the painful anxieties incident to all these circumstances, do not form an assemblage of

sufferings which recommend him to the mediation of all humanity? Allow me, Sir, on this occasion to be its organ; and to entreat that he may be permitted to come to this country on such conditions as Your Majesty may think it expedient to prescribe.

"As it is a maxim with me not to ask what under similar circumstances I would not grant, Your Majesty will do me the justice to believe that this request appears to me to correspond with those great principles of magnanimity and wisdom which form the basis of sound policy and durable glory."

There is no reply of the emperor's to be found, and nothing was done to ameliorate the condition of the prisoner.

It seems odd that though France passed through so many administrations, each diametrically opposed to every idea of the one previously in power, they were unanimously in accord on the subject of imprisonment. Lafayette knew too much, and too intimately, the antecedents of the so-called "patriots," those Republicans, each waiting to grasp the crown of France, could he but distance his associates. The "patriots" had murdered their king and their queen "in the name of liberty!" *La Liberté* in her turn had murdered the people in hundreds, in thousands, in hundreds of thousands. Patriotism had ceased to play a part in the farce. All the great benefits which Jacques Bonhomme had been promised by those inciting him to stain his hands and make his nation a synonym for bloodshed and ruffianism, where were they? The country was in a fearful condition, none knew what would come next. The French, of all nations, is one to be firmly ruled. Loving the pomp and pageant of glittering power, it is not of the temperament to be awed by simple and quiet authority. Its soldiers must charge with intimidating clatter of sabre and jangle of accoutrement. It loves its *main de fer gantée en velour*, but the glove must be of gorgeous velvet, stiff with gold and embroidery.

It requires a ruler alive to every mood of its complex mercurial character. The hour furnished the man—Napoleon. He was not of royal, not even of noble, birth; he was of the people, and yet was there ever king more autocratic? He ruled by the force of his personality. He had no precedent, neither father nor grandfather, on whose royal edicts to found his decrees. He ruled from the code of justice. He took France at her worst and made her what she has never been before or since . . . and will not be again until another Napoleon Bonaparte comes to the front. The masses of his countrymen adored him—for the time being—as they had cheered and idolised others; but the cheers sank into hisses, the gestures of enthusiasm changed to motions of weapon-filled hands; jeering comments took the place of former pæans of praise, as the laurels withered on the once victorious brow.

. . . . . .

At this period, strangely contradictory as it may seem, Mme. de Lafayette was perfectly happy. Her object was achieved; she was once again united to her adored husband, and with him more than had ever been the case before. Almost since the day of their youthful marriage the call of patriotism and duty had torn him incessantly from her side. He had been the love, the idol of her life since she was fourteen, and this was practically the first time during all the years of her wedded life that she could devote herself wholly to him, to enjoy his companionship without fear of interruption. Poor woman! for the past three years she had not been able even to cherish the hope that they should meet again! So, despite the sordid surroundings, the miserable discomforts of the confinement, she was so peacefully happy that she constantly reproached herself for being contented, with her husband still a prisoner. It grieved her greatly that she was unable to improve the lot of her fellow sufferers.

LAFAYETTE AND HIS FAMILY IN PRISON

"From the original picture in the possession of Sir John Fleming Leicester, Bart, to whom this plate is respectfully dedicated, by his very obliged servant, John Jeffreys, 1805"

She was allowed to write letters to her bankers to procure money to pay for their food, and also short letters to her sister, Mme. de Montagu, but as these were read by one of the officers, the correspondence was of necessity very stiff and formal. Adrienne probably would have written notes explaining only her happiness in being reunited to M. de Lafayette, but that sense of duty so predominant in her nature forced her to describe, instead, the unhappy condition of the prisoners, thereby hoping to better their lot. It greatly annoyed her on one occasion, having written a letter to her son on the second page of her usual letter to the banker, to have it returned to her, as the Austrian authorities did not wish any information of the condition of things at Olmütz to reach the United States, particularly to be received by young Lafayette, then living under the care of General Washington. She occupied herself many hours, writing with a toothpick and a tiny scrap of India ink on the margins left on the engravings of a volume of Buffon, an account of the life of her mother, the Duchesse d'Ayen. She wrote this work of love in the hope that it might one day be treasured by her grandchildren. With the imaginative and deeply devout mind which was hers, she often communed in spirit with the dear dead, deeply impressed with the thought that perhaps it was owing to their prayers and intercession that she now had the happiness of being with her husband, resting at an oasis of peace after all the deserts of war and revolution she had so bravely traversed.

But the close confinement in those unhealthy cells, with no ventilation, and the ever-present poisonous fumes from the moat under her window, combined with the fact that she had no exercise, reduced her to a state of health which gave great alarm to her family. So concerned did they become that after repeated urging she consented to obey the wishes of her husband in writing to the emperor, asking permission to travel to

Vienna for the necessary consultations with the doctors. In reality, her chief object in consenting to go was the cherished hope that she might be of use to her fellow prisoners.

Olmütz, February 6, 1796.

"Sire: Had I sooner been given leave to write, I should long since have offered my grateful thanks to Your Imperial Majesty for having permitted us to share the captivity of one so dear. To these thanks, Sire, I shall add no details of M. de Lafayette's condition, however different it may be from what I imagined on leaving Your Majesty's presence; to my great regret I shall only speak of myself. My health, impaired by sufferings and misfortunes, my duty towards those who are still left to me in this world constrains me to solicit permission to go for some days to Vienna, leaving my daughters with their father, in order to consult doctors on my state. I should not have importuned Your Majesty with this request had I not been told that it could be only granted by yourself.

"I entreat," etc. . . .

After nearly eight weeks of weary waiting, growing daily more sick, she received her first visit from the Commander of Olmütz, who informed her verbally that the answer to her request was that she might go to Vienna as she had desired, but in that case would be obliged to give up all hope of returning to Olmütz. He requested a written answer. She wrote at once:

April 4, 1796.

"The Commander of Olmütz having declared to me that on my request to go for a week to Vienna in order to consult the doctors, his Imperial Majesty does not permit me, under any pretense whatever, to go to Vienna, and only allows me to leave this prison on condition never to enter it again, I have the honour

here to renew my answer. It was my duty towards my family and friends to try and obtain the advice necessary for my health, but they well know that I cannot accept the conditions offered to me. I cannot forget that while we were both on the eve of perishing, I through the tyranny of Robespierre, M. de Lafayette through the physical and moral sufferings of his captivity, I was neither allowed to receive any accounts of him or to let him know that his children and I were still alive. I shall not expose myself to the horrors of another separation. Therefore, whatever may be the state of my health or the hardships of this abode for my daughters, we shall all three take advantage of His Imperial Majesty's goodness in allowing us to share this captivity in all its details.

"NOAILLES-LAFAYETTE."

The illness of Mme. de Lafayette made dreadful and rapid progress on account of the inhuman conduct of the authorities, of whose methods much might be written. It is incredible how any man could be so indifferent to the piteous sufferings of a woman. She was only allowed to see the doctor for a couple of minutes each day, and that in the presence of an officer. The doctor spoke no French, and was obliged to express his fears and opinions in Latin, which tongue Lafayette understood fairly well. The poor lady was in a fearful condition. She had a violent eruption on her arms, which swelled in such a manner and to such a size that it was impossible to lift, or even move, them at all. Later she had a repetition of the eruption on her legs, and was never without fever; in this deplorable state she dragged through eleven months of that life which had been so full of sorrow. During this time, from October, 1796, to September, 1797, she could obtain no better or more humane treatment from her gaolers—even being denied an armchair!

Virginie, writing of this moment, says: "Seeing her

always serene, always enjoying my father's company and the consolations she had brought with her, we were all less anxious than we ought to have been. This explains how, save in the beginning of the illness, she found pleasure in our quiet life."

Driven by that hard mistress Necessity, all the ingenuity of those devoted daughters was called into play. Anastasie, who proved to be quite a genius, even made shoes for her father! She also wrote, under his dictation, on the margins of a book with that precious bit of India ink and a toothpick, both of which were too valuable "to be entrusted to Virginie," whom her mother occupied herself in educating. In the evenings they worked, or busied themselves quietly, while their father read aloud, the memory of these hours being spoken of years after with evident and sincere pleasure. But what a life! They were veritably buried alive, but, to believe in the old proverb, "There's a silver lining to every cloud," and their lining was very shortly to appear through the darkness of the overhanging firmament.

CHAPTER XX

ISOLATED as they were from the pulsating, active world, there were many who did not forget the Lafayettes, and tried by various means to establish communication with the interior of the prison. A few months after Mme. de Lafayette had joined her husband, some friendly and patriotic Germans succeeded, after many dangers and unsuccessful attempts, in arranging a means by which messages could be sent, the rector of the university, toward whom, ever after, they "all professed the greatest gratitude," being the first to send them news. He very cleverly invented a method which allowed Mme. de Lafayette to correspond with her friends without having the contents of her letters inspected by the gaolers, after which a friend took them across the Austrian frontier, and the rest was easy. The exact details of this correspondence are not known, but bribery played a large part in the "system." Is it not extraordinary how prisoners in all ages have outwitted their gaolers? How they have managed to communicate among themselves and with the outside world. This indisputable fact shows plainly that the deductions of the estimable Mr. Walpole are irrefutable: "Every man has his price."

Before the family of Lafayette had joined him, his secretary had very ingeniously arranged a means of communication with his captive friends by means of sounds played on that little reed instrument known as a "Pan's pipe," the cipher being understood by M. de Maubourg's servant. They played those airs known in Paris as "Airs of the Pont Neuf," from the fact

of their being popular and familiar to all, so that a few notes gave an idea of what they wished to convey, and the quick wits of the prisoners jumped at the necessary conclusion. This method was tedious and incomplete, though it sufficed for a while, being better than nothing. An easier way was planned later, its medium being a kindly soldier, whose hearty peasant appetite laid him prey to the wiles of temptation. Having been regaled with an ample supper, he would allow, nay, even assist, the prisoners to lower a parcel containing food from their window; in turn lowering it to the sentry guarding MM. Maubourg and de Pusy, this latter passing it in to the prisoners. Consequently, many bits of information were circulated in the prison in a manner of which the authorities remained in blissful ignorance. The accomplished Anastasie managed to make a little though very accurate sketch of a gaoler whose appearance was a source of much amusement to the young girls. As he was not of a sufficiently obliging temperament to act as a model, she secretly drew him on her thumb-nail, later transferring the effort to paper. This sketch was preserved at Lagrange. The corporal is " represented in the act of opening the door of the prison which looks upon the corridor, and which is secured above and below with crossed bars provided with padlocks. His bald head is uncovered; his few remaining hairs are collected into a little queue, which is ludicrously turned aside over his shoulder; and he advances with the stealthy pace of a timid individual who lends an attentive ear to some fancied noise. In one hand he holds a bunch of large keys, one of which he directs mechanically towards the lock; in the other hand he holds one of those beaked lamps which are much used in Germany, and its dim light is reflected on his visage. A stick, which serves for self-defence or the chastisement of offenders, is attached to his wrist by a leather strap; his little three-cornered hat is squeezed flat under his arm; his sabre is fastened to his

side by a girdle; his waistcoat, breeches, wide boots, and, in fact, the whole of his attire, show that he is in undress, and his knees seem to bend, not so much under the weight of years, as under the influence of cowardice."

. . . . .

The tide of time and events had now carried France on to that pinnacle of glory whose summit she was to occupy for the next decade. Italy had been conquered, and its unwilling rulers forced to pay 45,000,000 francs to the victors.

"Soldiers," Napoleon addressed his men, "you are poorly fed and almost naked. The government owes you much, but it can do nothing. I am about to lead you into the most fertile plain in the world. Here great cities and prosperous provinces await you. There you will find honours, glory, riches. Soldiers of the Army of Italy, will you lack courage for the enterprise?"

The soldiers "did not" lack courage, and the "most fertile plain" enabled him to feed, to clothe his penniless army; to send 10,000,000 francs home to the Directory, another million to aid the French army in Germany. He had won eighteen battles, demolished three Austrian armies, and gained the Austrian Netherlands; the latter being ceded to France by the peace of Campo-Formio, July, 1797. France was in a position to dictate to continental Europe.

News of these great events was slow in penetrating the thick walls of Olmütz, and the prisoners were surprised to receive a visit from the Austrian general, the Marquis de Chastelar, who came at his master's bidding to offer them their liberty, on condition that they would leave and never return to the Austrian dominions. Having secretly received, through their hidden means of communication, shortly before Chastelar's arrival, the information that the French Government had insisted on their liberation, though with the pro-

viso that the three prisoners were not to return to France, they consulted by the same means in the prison, and returned the following answer to the proposition, Lafayette refusing to allow his rights as a Frenchman and as an American citizen to be tampered with:

"The communication with the commission of which Lieut.-Gen. the Marquis de Chastelar has been charged, seems to me to resolve itself into the consideration of three points: 1st. His Imperial Majesty requires an authenticated statement of our condition. I am not disposed at present to complain of any grievances. Several representations, however, may be found in the letters of my wife, transmitted or sent by the Austrian government; and if his Majesty is not satisfied by the perusal of the instructions sent, in his name, from Vienna, I will cheerfully communicate to M. de Chastelar all the information he can possibly desire.

"2nd. His Majesty the Emperor and King, is desirous of obtaining an assurance that upon my liberation I shall immediately leave Europe for America. This has often been my desire and my intention, but as my consent at this moment to his Majesty's request would constitute an acknowledgment of his right to impose such a condition, I do not feel disposed to comply with this demand.

"3rd. His Majesty the Emperor and King, has graciously done me the honour to signify that inasmuch as the principles I profess are incompatible with the safety of the Austrian government, he cannot consent to allow me to enter his territory again without his special permission. To this I have only to reply that there already exist antecedent obligations of which I cannot possibly divest myself, partly towards America, but mostly towards France, and I cannot engage to do anything which might interfere with the rights of my country to my personal services. With these exceptions I can assure the Marquis de Chastelar that my invariable resolution is not to set foot upon any territory under

the dominion of his Majesty the King of Bohemia and Hungary."

Though this reply once more closed the prison doors upon them, Lafayette was applauded and upheld in the position he had taken by the approval and admiration of his wife, whose well-known views of right and integrity of conscience permitted only the most honourable and lofty actions, always judging others from her exalted point of view. She would not have countenanced weakness in her husband, much as she loved him, greatly as she longed to be at liberty once more. But France had conquered Europe, and was in a position to dictate. Two months later Napoleon demanded that the prisoners of Olmütz should be set at liberty. He sent Louis Romeuf, who had at one time been aide-de-camp to Lafayette, from the Army of Italy with commands of the most peremptory nature to Vienna to force the execution of his orders. After much difficulty, discussion, and delay on the part of the Austrian Government, when the French envoy curtly refused to wait an instant longer the necessary papers were forwarded to Olmütz, the sullen massive gates creaked forbiddingly on their hinges, the sharp clash of steel-shod hoofs rang on the pavement, a roll of wheels sounded hollow over the drawbridge, and the prisoners were once more free! Free to enjoy the blue sky and the sunshine, to inhale the pure air, which proved so strong for lungs long accustomed to foul impurities that they were almost overcome. Five years and a month had elapsed since Lafayette's arrest. On September 19, 1797, they started for Hamburg, having been in prison with him for twenty-three months; being accompanied by a major of the Austrian army, who travelled in a separate carriage. Great precautions were necessary to enable them to reach the frontier, and it was with deep and heartfelt breaths of relief that they passed from the country where they had endured such needless misery.

Once free of the Austrian dominions, their progress was a continued triumph. At Dresden, Leipsic, Halle, and Hamburg crowds assembled to see the famous French patriot. These demonstrations were too much for the strength of Mme. de Lafayette, whose terrible state of health kept her from feeling or as yet deriving any benefit from the change. But she bravely bore her sufferings, hiding her pain from the loving eyes watching her so closely, and managing to take some part in the general rejoicings and great friendliness shown them on every hand. On their arrival at Hamburg, where they stopped two days to rest, Lafayette's first action was to write the following letter to General Bonaparte:

Hamburg, October 6, 1797.

"*Citoyen Général:* The prisoners of Olmütz, happy to owe their deliverance to your irresistible arms, had during their captivity rejoiced at the thought that their liberty and their life were attached to the victories of the Republic and to your personal glory. It is with the utmost satisfaction that they now do homage to their liberator. We should have liked, *Citoyen Général*, to have offered you in person the expression of these feelings, to have witnessed with our own eyes the scenes of so many victories, the army which has won them, and the general who has placed our resurrection among the miracles he has accomplished. But you know that the journey to Hamburg has not been left to our choice. It is from the place where we took leave of our gaolers that we address our thanks to their victor.

"In the solitary retreat on the Danish territory of Holstein, where we shall try to recover our health, we shall unite our patriotic wishes for the Republic with the most lively interest in the illustrious general to whom we are still more attached on account of the services he has rendered to the cause of Liberty and to our

country, than for the particular obligation we glorify in owing him, and which the deepest gratitude has ever engraved on our hearts.

"*Salut et respect,*
"LAFAYETTE,
"LA TOUR MAUBOURG,
"BUREAUX DE PUSY."

Among the many French at Hamburg, they found the aide-de-camp of Lafayette with letters and news from home. The American consul hastened to greet them, the celebrated Klopstock who had long ago inveighed against the treatment of Lafayette, the "generous d'Archenoltz." The Americans held a reception, presenting an address full of welcome and touching sympathy; so this family, which had undergone so much, was at last surrounded by love and sympathy, while kindness poured its balm into these lacerated hearts. They received quantities of letters from all sorts of persons; in particular, one from the celebrated Mme. de Staël:

June 10, 1797.

"I hope this letter will reach you. I should like to be one of the first to tell you of the feelings of indignation, grief, hope, fear, anxiety, discouragement, with which your fate has filled during the last five years the hearts of all those who love you. I do not know whether it is possible to make those cruel recollections bearable to you; nevertheless, I may say that while calumny was destroying every reputation, while faction, unable to triumph over the cause, was attacking every individual, your misfortunes preserved your glory, and if your health can be restored to you, you come out whole from a tomb where your name has acquired fresh lustre. Come directly to France; there is no other country for you. You will find that republic which your opinions led you to wish for when your

conscience bound you to royalty. You will find it illustrious with victory and free from the crimes which stained its origin, you will uphold that Republic, because without it no liberty can exist in France, and because as a hero and as a martyr you are so united with freedom that I indifferently pronounce your name to express what I wish for the honour and welfare of France.

"Come to France; there you will find devoted friends, and let me hope that my constant care for your welfare, and my useless efforts to serve you, may entitle me to a small place in your thoughts."

On December 1, 1797, they arrived at the end of their journey, which was the home bought by Mme. de Tessé, a lovely peninsula on Lake Ploën. Later, M. de Lafayette took a château at Lhemkuln, in Holstein, near the estate of Mme. de Tessé, where they were to pass the winter. On their arrival at the home of this much-loved aunt, they were almost overwhelmed with kindness, so glad were the assembled friends and relatives to welcome the long-lost prisoners. Mme. de Montagu came to them, and, much to the pleasure of Lafayette, the Comte de Mun and M. de Lameth, a former aide-de-camp of the general. They were soon joined by many of the extensive family of La Tour Maubourg, among whom was Charles, soon to become the son-in-law of Lafayette. Coming to see his sister, Mme. de Maisonneuve, he soon fell victim to the charms of the gentle Anastasie, who at first sight loved the handsome youth. The "nobility and loftiness of the sentiments he expressed" charmed the heart of the daughter of Mme. de Lafayette, where perhaps a less serious wooer would have met with no response. But this girl had been cradled in alarms, had known more tears than joy in her childhood, she was old for her years, and the late captivity had sobered those spirits which other girls of her age and rank would have had. She was just

beginning to shake off the distress and gloominess of the last five years; for, though a child when these terrible evils began to occur, the very atmosphere was heavy with apprehension and gloom had mingled with her play hours. Her lover was quiet, said little, but this did not hinder the young people from exchanging sentiments pleasing to both, and the parents delightedly consented to a union for love alone.

Unlike the usual ceremonious arrangements of the times, the betrothal breathed a spirit of patriarchal simplicity, as, owing to the state of affairs in France and the impossibility of the Lafayettes knowing anything about their finances, or, indeed, if they had any property, there was no delay about settlements; no one knew if there was anything left to settle! Charles did not fear poverty; he knew it, as did most Frenchmen of noble family at that time. Hard experience had developed the practical side in many a man's nature. Every one was overjoyed at the marriage which would more closely knit the friendship of two families united by years and misfortune. Mme. de Tessé threw up her hands in horror at the Adam-and-Eve-like simplicity of the proceedings—and promptly provided the trousseau! She was one of the very few *émigrés* who had the forethought to leave France with something for a rainy day. As for the larger part of that band of wandering nobles, they "took flight like the swallows." The only thing remaining to Mme. de Montagu, of all her ancient luxury, "was a pair of gold-handled scissors," which from their utility and convenience she had not thought to part with, though the money would have been most useful to the hard-pressed woman. But prudent Mme. de Tessé had, on arriving in Holstein, at once invested part of what she had saved in a farm, cows, and other food-producing animals, and so derived a comfortable income, and was able to help those innumerable ones less fortunate than herself.

On May 5, 1798, the simple wedding was solemnised

in the chapel at Mme. de Tessé's home, Witmold, this being before the Lafayettes had decided to take a place of their own. Poor Mme. de Lafayette was in such a condition that she was obliged to be carried in a chair by her future son-in-law and George Lafayette, who had just returned from America in time to be present at his sister's wedding. Her health at this time was the cause of terrible anxiety to them all. Her disorder, neglected in prison from the heartlessness of the authorities, to whom she appealed for proper aid and medical attendance, had become very severe. As ever, the joy of seeing others happy made her forget self.

"When I think," she wrote, "of the fearful situation that my children were in a short time ago, when I see them all about me, to find myself on the point of adopting a fourth child according to my heart, I feel unable to thank God sufficiently."

The time passed at the quaint, grim old castle of Lhemkuln was very pleasant and restful to the lately freed prisoners. The cheerful society of Mme. de Tessé, "who had always been a favourite of M. de Lafayette, and her piquant amusing conversation passed many an hour," and put them *au courant* of the happenings of the last years, while they had been at Olmütz.

Though she was improving very slowly, business made it imperative that Mme. de Lafayette should return to France, as she was the only one of the family who could enter that turbulent country, her name not being on the list of those proscribed or upon any list of suspects. She must go at once to see what had become of the property belonging to her husband, and the not inconsiderable share of her mother's, which she had inherited through the death of the Duchesse d'Ayen. Taking with her Anastasie and her husband, Charles de Maubourg, and Virginie, she journeyed to Holland, where, after a short rest, leaving Anastasie with her

husband's people, she resumed her way to Paris with Virginie.

It would be most interesting, were there more details of this visit to France, but the country was in a condition of terrible confusion after the excesses of the past years, and she was unable to accomplish much. She visited Paris, arranged what matters she could, then flew to the welcoming arms of old Mme. de Chavinac. After a brief visit, the mother and daughter departed, taking their way home. The following year the various members of the family were united at Vianen, near Utrecht. Here was it Mme. de Lafayette's eager arms held tenderly the child of Anastasie—Celestine de Maubourg, her grandchild. To add, if possible, to the joy of this torn and tortured heart, her sisters, Mme. de Grammont and Mme. de Montagu, came from France, to her home near Witmold. The three sisters had not been together for eight years, and the two latter had not met for more than that length of time. Mme. de Lafayette was forty, Mme. de Grammont thirty-one, and Mme. de Montagu thirty. Mme. de Lafayette's "misfortunes had greatly aged her, but beneath the signs of suffering there was an air of surprising calm, resolution, and resignation, which had in it something imposing," wrote Mme. de Montagu after this meeting. The illusions of their youth had been shattered. Their lives saddened by the terrible situation of their country, of their relations; but, together once more, the years seemed brushed aside and they were again the happy daughters of a stately, gentle mother, playing at life beneath the sunny shadows of the spreading trees in the peaceful garden. Their education had been peculiar, their mother different from most women of her circle; but in the wonderfully strong love of their families and of each other they all resembled the martyred Duchesse d'Ayen. Though time and sorrow had rounded the angles, softened prejudice and opinion, it had not served to change the

strong and distinctive characteristics of each. In one of Mme. de Montagu's letters, found later, she wrote of her sister:

"Adrienne is admirable for her faith, her zeal, her uprightness. Every moment I find in her an example to copy. I am struck more than ever by her enlightened and cultivated mind. She has such a sweet way of listening. I may say that God has given her all that was necessary for the great career which awaited her."

M. de Lafayette and George were of this family party, but they were not content. Each place they visited, though satisfactory at first, quickly became wearying. They were eager and impatient of delay until again on the wing. It was the heart-cry of the exile to visit his native country once more, and it could not be stilled or silenced. The three sisters were together for a month. Then again did that devoted woman determinedly put aside the thought of all she had suffered through the winter, and once more travel to Paris with her youngest daughter. Lafayette was in Holland, where he had been warmly welcomed and well treated by the Dutch, finding a very excellent friend in General Van Ryssel, whose daughter had married Victor de Maubourg, the brother of Charles, his son-in-law.

Again in France, Mme. de Lafayette found great confusion prevailing; everything was on the verge of an upheaval. Nothing could be predicted a week ahead. There was much fear that the Terrorist party would be once more the controlling power. The universally execrated Jacobins were regaining their strength; events hung breathlessly on the brink of a chasm—waiting.

The troops of the Coalition had gained many victories. There was an English army at the Helder. Everything was said at Paris. Again fate seemed to be weaving a heavy veil between Adrienne de Lafayette and her husband. She could not, dared not, form the thought that they might once more be separated.

The Batavian Government was friendly, and despite the commands and injunctions of General Brune, Lafayette was welcome there. His wife reasoned that if he could not depend on the protection of the armies of France, what would be the result if Holland was in the power of the Coalition—of the counter-revolution? This, and much else, was the talk at Paris.

At last, taking matters in her own hands, she went to see the Director Sieyès, who was the leader of the party opposed to the Jacobins. She stated the facts of the matter to him, adding that in the danger to which her husband would be exposed in the event of the foreign armies being victorious, he would return to France. Very probably, not wishing the presence of Lafayette in France at that crisis, Sieyès told her warningly that such a proceeding would not be advisable, that he would find a safer refuge in the states of the King of Prussia.

"Who kept him prisoner," she returned. "M. de Lafayette would prefer, if necessary, a prison in France; but he has more confidence in his fellow countrymen."

In the midst of these agitations and nerve-racking worries, that sharp, decisive, revolution of the 18th Brumaire happened. At once the aspect of the political horizon was totally changed. With that great affinity of spirits ever existing between them, she felt that his place was in France, that her husband would wish her to send for him. She did so. He had complete confidence in her judgment, she knew he would come unquestioningly. She wished him to return without asking permission, so that it should not be thought that he waited until arrangements to his advantage could be made. The new government had issued proclamations in a spirit of liberality and freedom of ideas, indicating broad political toleration. Lafayette should come and share with his fellow exiles; he asked no favour. In an assumed name she sent to him, by M. Alexis Marbeouf,

a former aide-de-camp, the required passport; and with it he started and soon arrived in Paris.

What were his sensations, his emotions, as he again traversed the streets where once his very appearance had been the signal for acclaim—where now no head turned to look at him? Few recognised, none cared. There is no man so little appreciated as the incorruptible patriot. The tyrant comes to us through countless ages, "linked with one virtue and a thousand crimes," and history blazes forth his name; the patriot's reward, a quiet stone in an obscure churchyard—*sic transit gloria*, etc.

Napoleon, then premier consul, received the news of Lafayette's return with little pleasure, in fact, with annoyance, remarking "that if he exposed himself to the danger of being taken by the English, the Coalition will never give him up." He was, while in Egypt, very favourably inclined toward Lafayette, at that time in Holland, but the consul wished to be consulted about everything, and probably the fact that Lafayette returned without asking his permission may have, in some way, offended his dignity. Mme. de Lafayette, then in Paris, called on him, and was graciously received. He told her that her husband's sudden appearance had "*Entraverait sa marche*; I know best, Madame, what is to be done in his interests; I beg of him to avoid all *éclat. Je n'en rapporte à son patriotisme.*" Napoleon was impressed with the good sense and tact which she exhibited on this occasion.

"I am charmed, Madame, to make your acquaintance; *vous avez beaucoup d'esprit, mais vous n'entendez pas les affaires.*"

They finally arranged that M. de Lafayette should remain in France, without concealing, but without attracting attention to, his movements. He was to ask for no permission, but would withdraw with his family to the country, and there await the legal time of his proscription. Mme. de Montagu and her husband had

prior to this time arrived from Holland, and George was with his father, so the family retired to Fontenay, finally going to Lagrange, Bleneau, in the *département* of the Seine-et-Marne, thirteen leagues from Paris, near Rosnay in Brie, and about half-way from Melun to Meaux. The farm, consisting of about eight hundred acres, was well wooded, fertile, and well cultivated. This historical estate had been the property of the late Duchesse d'Ayen, from whom Mme. de Lafayette inherited it. A beautiful place, rejoicing in gardens and vineyards, surrounded by villages patriarchal enough to please the most profound antiquarian, it had withstood the cannons of the Fronde, though the great hall bears a scar from a ball sent under the orders of the great Turenne, the torch and despoliation of the Revolution, and now once again sheltered the descendants of its illustrious owners. In the little village at its gates, facing the square or market-place, nestled a tiny nunnery, founded by Mme. de Lafayette's grandmother, the Maréchale de Noailles, which was rather unlike most convents, as the nuns were allowed the liberty of going and coming as they pleased. This little community survived the Terror, and was greatly rejoiced to see again its patroness and friend, for whose welfare and preservation so many prayers had been offered.

Some years later, while visiting France, Professor Carter wrote the following detailed description of Lagrange, in which he says that "Lagrange was formerly a fortified baronial castle, and notwithstanding the modifications it has undergone, much of its antique and feudal character still remains. It was once surrounded by a deep moat, most sections of which, filled with water, have been preserved, and the residue filled up, either for the sake of health or convenience. The edifice consists of a centre, perhaps a hundred feet in length, with two wings of about the same dimensions, and joining it at right angles. From traces still vis-

ible, a gallery evidently extended across at the extremity of the wings, enclosing a quadrangular courtyard, strongly defended, with only one entrance under a lofty arch in the northern wall, guarded by a portcullis.

"The château is three stories high, plainly constructed of a hard and dark-coloured stone, rendered of a deeper hue by its venerable age and long exposure to the climate. Two Gothic towers of a conical shape rise from the ends of each of the wings, and form almost the only ornament. The approach is by a winding avenue on the northern side, leading through a thick grove of evergreens and other trees, and under the arch already mentioned, around which hang festoons of ivy, planted by the celebrated Charles James Fox, in one of his visits to Lagrange. The beautiful plant is as green as his memory, and mantles nearly the whole façade of the château. Its luxuriant foliage shading the gray walls, the thick copse bordering the moat, and the four antique turrets, half concealed by the intervening bushes, present a view on this side seldom equalled in its air of rural quiet and unostentatious retirement."

Like the tossed ship, now over the breakers and resting in smooth waters, the persecuted family could hardly realise that this quiet uneventful life was not a dream. For the first time in many years they were all together. There was no imperative necessity of their being separated. To the logical mind of Lafayette, there was no reason why his companions in captivity should not return to France, since he, their chief, was there and at liberty. The government was not unfriendly, but did not care to inaugurate a special movement toward the officers who had followed Lafayette on August 19, 1792. As usual, Mme. de Lafayette was the ambassador to whom these delicate negotiations were entrusted. Cautiously she journeyed between Paris and Lagrange, always hoping that the "next time she would be able to make the final and satisfactory arrangements. . . . She succeeded, and to her sole

CHATEAU DE LA GRANGE-BLENEAU

From the collection of the author

and personal labours, exertions, diplomacy, what you will, each one of that devoted band owed his 'radiation.'"

She longed for a life of peace and quiet, as did her husband. Had the Consulate continued, this might not have been achieved, but the glorious, gorgeous, imperial despotism made the patriot, for honour's sake, lay down his sword for the ploughshare. From conversations repeated by Lafayette some years later, we learn of the rather curious condition of affairs which existed between Napoleon and himself. It could not be that the great Napoleon was jealous of the man, but probably the influence of the patriot was what he thought might prove an opposing factor in his schemes of unbounded ambition. He was unquestionably annoyed at Lafayette's unexpected return to France.

When the funeral oration on the death of General Washington was pronounced at the Invalides, the mention of Lafayette's name was peremptorily forbidden, an extraordinary command, when the two men were so linked before the whole world by destiny. The First Consul was exceedingly angry when George Lafayette, the great Washington's namesake, was invited to be present at the solemn ceremony. Did he think that the name of Lafayette, associated in every mind with the word liberty, would recall to that fickle people over whom he hoped to rule the purpose, the chimera, in search of which they had committed such excesses? Did he think the resurrected cause of Liberty would bar his advancement, and contest his way to the imperial throne? Lafayette had been the idol of the people in the first flush of the struggle; he was hated by many, and feared by those whose duplicity he mercilessly exposed, but that uncertain nation might once more hail him as the saviour of Liberty and the Rights of Man —and then? What the wonderful brain of Napoleon foresaw will never be known, but it would be enthralling reading. During his term as First Consul he fre-

quently sent for and had many agreeable and friendly conversations with the marquis. At his order, Talleyrand was permitted to offer him the post of ambassador to the United States. It was not merely an offer, but to press his acceptance of this distinction, the tender was strongly backed by the ministers. To quote Lafayette:

"I answered that I was too much of an American to present myself in the part of a foreign diplomat. Talleyrand afterwards pressed on my acceptance a seat in the Senate. I declined it laughingly, saying that probably the very day after my admission I might find myself under the necessity of denouncing the Administration of the chief. The *mot* was carried to the First Consul, who said to General Dumas (father of the novelist):

"'*Je n'aime pas à passer pour un tyran; le général Lafayette semble me désigner comme tel.*' I replied that if Bonaparte would serve the cause of Liberty, I would serve him with *dévouement*, but that I would not serve or associate myself with an arbitrary government."

Later, all intercourse between them ceased, Lafayette having voted against the Consulate for life, as it was not consistent with his ideas, being too arbitrary and savouring strongly of absolutism. His vote was worded: "I cannot vote for such a Magistracy until public liberty has been sufficiently guaranteed; then will I give my vote to Napoleon Bonaparte."

The attitude assumed by the general probably had much to do with the animosity Napoleon always displayed toward George Lafayette. Though he at first evinced a partiality for the young man, who bid fair to be a very promising officer, he finally displayed an unworthy and most petty dislike toward him, peremptorily refusing advancement or promotion, though numerous opportunities occurred when honour dictated this as the only course to follow. The requests, solici-

tations, and expostulations of his most distinguished generals had no effect on the Man of Destiny. Napoleon's behaviour was unjust, unbecoming, and utterly despicable in one of his wonderful ability and high position. Convinced of the fact that in the army there was no career for him, George reluctantly tendered his resignation soon after the Peace of Tilsit. It was accepted, and he retired to Lagrange shortly before the Spanish war was declared. Despite a certain regret which Mme. de Lafayette felt at the treatment of her only son, the daily pleasure which the sight of him afforded her amply compensated for such added glories as his career might have afforded. Like her dead mother, worldly glory meant nothing to her when weighed against the safety of the child who was so dear to her maternal heart.

CHAPTER XXI

AT last peace seemed to have come to the dauntless woman who had given so much, endured such sacrifices and privations, such miseries, for those dear to her. Her health imperatively demanded quiet and rest after the awful events through which she had passed so bravely. Even had the quiet not been necessary, it was what she preferred above everything. To one so totally engrossed in her family, finding more than sufficient the daily unexciting routine, the life she now led was paradise. As her daughter says of her:

"She felt too deeply, too passionately, I may say, the emotions of family life to wish for any other. Neither the grandeur of her former position, nor even the lustre of her misfortunes, had given birth in her mind to that restless pride which cannot bear to return to a homely life. Though her devoted courage had risen above the greatest trials, still the feelings and easy duties of an obscure destiny would have sufficed to satisfy her heart. Love filled her whole being."

The last few years of her life afforded her more pleasure and greater enjoyment than she had ever dared picture in her fondest imagination. Her world was around her. She suffered some anxiety on account of George, who was wounded at the battle of Mincio, but this soon passed away and was forgotten in the great joy which his marriage brought to her. He wedded in 1802, and the charming summer days were passed with his bride, Emilie, the daughter of the Comte de Tracy, at beautiful Lagrange. Always eager

to share their joys with those dear to them, this patriarchal family journeyed to Chavinac, where they were welcomed with inexpressible joy by Mme. de Chavinac, aged, but still in possession of all her faculties. Her many trials had not in the least broken her spirit or chilled the warmth of her heart, and she welcomed the new member of the family with much tenderness, and insisted on telling the stalwart bridegroom that he had grown! Which, though a serious affront to his dignity, was true, as his aunt had not seen him for some years. She took a great delight in relating to the young bride those childish pranks of which she had been so proud, with which George had been wont to enliven the stately quiet of the château in former times.

What melancholy events had passed since they were last all together at Chavinac! How carelessly Mme. de Lafayette had parted from the mother and sister, whom she was never more to meet! Each spot in the grounds, each tree, recalled an hour pleasantly spent; a half-ended conversation, jesting words from lips still and cold in an unmarked grave; but the great happiness of the present was compensation for the agonies of times now forever past.

Deep and awful as is the grief of the moment, it cannot forever hold young hearts in its numbing grasp, and the ancient château with its memories and ghosts was the scene of a very pretty romance, which throve apace under the benign influence of friendly relatives, and filled the sunny hours of the waning autumn days with tender golden dreams. "A happy wife is ever a matchmaker," goes the old saw, and to her aunt, Mme. de Montagu, Virginie de Lafayette owed the gallant wooer whose suit was amply rewarded by the taper fingers of the youngest daughter of the family. Some time before, while at Brioude in Limousine on family matters, Mme. de Montagu had met and taken a great fancy to that gallant young colonel, Louis, Marquis de Lasteyrie du Sallant, and it was at her invitation that

he had come to Chavinac, where he immediately became a great favourite, being the happy possessor of one of those dispositions which makes friends with high and low, without in any way taking from the dignity or self-respect of the person in question. Mme. de Montagu had preceded the arrival of her *protégé* with a long and sisterly epistle to her sister Mme. Lafayette, written, in fact, shortly after she had met Louis de Lasteyrie, with whose family she had long been acquainted, in which she had not failed to enumerate the worldly advantages attached to the match. Her glowing eulogies were soon re-echoed by her sister, and Adrienne had the pleasure of once again reliving, as she watched the lovers, those bright hours of her youth when the storms of after years were never dreamed of, and she and the young marquis had stood before the gorgeous throng, now but ghosts! and sworn to be true, "For better, for worse."

We do not know if she preferred him to Latour Maubourg, the husband of Anastasie, but, like all mothers, she thought nothing too good for those faithful daughters, and the very handsome personality of Lasteyrie appealed to the heart which, despite its love of virture and goodness, did not disdain the personal appearance of one who was to be her son-in-law. In truth, she preferred a handsome husband for her daughter, to one equally meritorious, but less prepossessing, as Virginie said at the time:

"You may fancy how much he suited my mother's views, for she wished above all to find for each of her daughters a husband who united with religious principles and solid qualities every exterior advantage." Which naïve confession proves that even the heart of a heroine is but as the rest of us are.

The affair so happily begun, ended in a betrothal when M. de Lasteyrie followed them to Lagrange, to which ancestral demesne the family returned later. While preparations for the important event were

under way, the father of the bride had the misfortune to fall on a slippery pavement, breaking his hip. It proved to be a severe and complicated fracture, and the doctors, with that love of experiment dear to the medical mind, tried a new and much recommended method of treatment on their unfortunate patient, which, however, inflicted such painful and exquisite torture on the hapless marquis, that it was at once and forever abandoned, greatly to the gain of future sufferers.

Cloquet says: "The fractured limb was enclosed in a machine, which kept it in a constant state of tension; and as Lafayette had promised those skillful surgeons to support the pain with patience as long as they might judge it necessary for his cure, he uttered not a single complaint for the fifteen or twenty days during which the apparatus was applied. When it was removed, the surgeons were unable to conceal the annoyance they felt at the effect produced by the bandages. Deschamp turned pale; Boyer was stupefied; the upper bandages had, by their pressure, cut deeply into the muscles of the thigh, and laid bare the femoral artery; the action of the lower ones had been less violent, but they had produced a mortification of the skin at the back part of the foot, and laid bare the tendons of the toes! In consequence of Lafayette's stoical fortitude the vigilance of his surgeons was completely at fault. He bore the scars to the day of his death."

What agony, what unhappiness for those watching him! Mme. de Lafayette wrote to Père Carrichon, telling him of the accident: "We are all on the rack," she said; "beg God that we shall rest upon the cross."

On April 20, 1803, in a room adjoining that of her father, whose accident kept him chained to a bed of suffering, Virginie was united to the man she loved. Slender and spirituelle, "Her blonde beauty made her look like a child of fifteen, though she was nearly twenty." Devout and sincere was the blessing be-

stowed on the kneeling couple by the pious Carrichon; earnest, from the depth of his heart, the prayer for their wedded happiness. What a tumult of mingled emotions stirred the breast of the priest, whose blessing had sent her great-grandmother, her grandmother, and her aunt to eternal rest with peace in their resigned souls. Times had changed since the good old days, but young hearts beat happily, and gave little thought to the splendour "which had been Greece's." Mme. de Tessé gave the trousseau, and the other members of the family, "instead of giving jewellery, and the usual diamonds incident to the occasion, united, and presented the bride with a purse of two thousand francs" (one hundred louis). What a pathetic comment on the fallen fortunes of the family! Just twenty years ago, in 1783, one of the least items in the *corbeille de mariage* of her aunt, had been a purse, containing four hundred louis (eight thousand francs), which sum she promptly distributed among "those who had served her." Beneficial as revolutions may be, to mankind *en masse*, they are certainly destructive to the individual fortunes of the few!

The entire wedding party, accompanied by the general in a wheeled chair, repaired to the country seat of Mme. de Tessé at Aulnay, and there amused themselves in various ways, suited to their taste. Mme. de Tessé had "ceased to sell milk," as she had done while in exile, and, indeed, the bountiful hospitality which she constantly maintained would have made any such attempt futile. To the most remote degrees of kinship, the family was there, and, when a few years later, this august couple celebrated their golden wedding, it was a veritable tribe of biblical days which gathered around them.

Anastasie, in the life of her mother, says that: "Shortly after the wedding, Mme. de Lafayette received a letter from a priest, the contents of which excited and interested her greatly, though recalling

vividly the most sorrowful event in her stormy life. The priest wrote that after a long and ceaseless search, in which he had met with unnumbered obstacles, he had at last succeeded in finding the burial place of the thirteen hundred victims who had fallen by the guillotine in the last six weeks of the Reign of Terror near the Barrière du Trône. (Barrière du 'Trône renversé', as the wits named it after the days of fallen monarchy.) This was almost at the same moment as she had heard from Mme. de Montagu on the same subject. One of the first cares, "a pious duty of a devoted daughter," of Mme. de Montagu, after her return to France, was to try and learn where her mother, Mme. d'Ayen, had been buried. No one was able to tell her. All the *émigrés* were in the same ignorance concerning the fate of those near and dear, who had met their death upon the scaffold. All Paris knew where the victims had fallen, but none where they had found their eternal rest; the journals of the times made no comment; it was almost a state secret. On her return from Auvergne where she had been to attend to some family business, she heard of a poor girl, a lace maker by trade, Mlle. Paris, living in the *faubourg,* who might be able to furnish a clue. On this slight thread, Mme. de Montagu commenced the laborious search, and after heartrending disappointments, weary mounting of endless tortuous stairs, knocking at numberless doors, she arrived at the fourth-floor garret of Mlle. Paris, who, on seeing her, thought she was a new customer whom heaven had sent. The poor workwoman melted into tears when Mme. de Montagu had explained the object of her visit, and told her the following story:

"My father," she said, "was an infirm old man who had served the family of Brissac for thirty years; my brother, a little younger than myself, an employé in the staff office of the National Guard. He was very steady and economical, and supported us all by his

work, after the misfortune of the house of Brissac had deprived my father of his pension. As for myself, I had no occupation; none wore lace in the time of the Terror. One day my brother did not come home at the usual time. I went out to see what had happened, and when I returned, found the house deserted. My father, who could scarcely walk, had been dragged to prison in my absence, my brother also, during the morning. I have never been sure of what they were accused. They would neither shut me up with them, nor even allow me to embrace them. I never saw them again until they were in the *charette*, being taken to the guillotine. Some one who saw and recognised me in the crowd, tried in pity to lead me away, and on my refusal, went away crying. I saw my father and brother guillotined, and if I was not killed by the shock, it is because God upheld me. I did not fall, but stood riveted to the spot, mechanically stammering some prayers without seeing or hearing what was going on. When I came to myself, the Place du Trône was almost deserted, the crowd having dispersed in all directions. The blood-stained carts on which they had loaded the bodies of the poor victims took the road to the country, surrounded by several gendarmes. I did not know where they were going, but followed them, though I could hardly walk. They stopped at Picpus. It was nearly night, but I recognised perfectly the old house of the Augustines, and the place where they buried all in a mass, the unfortunates who had been guillotined. From that time, I have often gone there to pray; winter and summer, it is my walk on Sundays."

It had always been a great grief and sorrow to the pious daughters that they should not have even the poor consolation of praying beside the graves of those dearly beloved, who had been, as described by Mlle. Paris, buried in one undistinguishable mass, covered with quicklime, in the brutal fashion inaugurated at

the burial of the unfortunate sovereigns Louis and Marie Antoinette. She finally found that her mother and sister slept in the little cemetery of the Picpus, belonging to the convent of that name. The origin of this cemetery of Picpus is of great antiquity and curious interest. Far back in the fifteenth century the people of a part of France, in particular, of Paris, were visited by an irritating affliction. Its exact cause not being known to the unskilled *chirurgeons* of the day, the epidemic ran on, unchecked. It was characterised by numerous, not over-large, swellings on all parts of the body, in appearance having the effect of monster flea-bites, with the accompanying irritation and itching of the skin. Finally, a monk, whose name has been lost, affected so many cures that he established a little monastery, at a village, or rather, straggling collection of houses, near Paris, on the road to Vincennes, where, with a few brethren of his order, he continued to cure those who flocked to him. These monks became known as the *Pique Puces* (flea-bites), from their treatment of those irritating swellings, so similar to the bites of that bloodthirsty insect, which they cured in a simple manner, by opening the sores, expressing the virus, bathing the wounds, and allowing Dame Nature to pursue her healing way unhindered. The order became a flourishing one, always being known as the *Pique Puces*, and giving its name to the village, now swallowed by ever-growing Paris.

The vicissitudes of this order were many, and the monastery finally became the property of the Canonesses of Saint Augustine, to whom it belonged at the outbreak of the Revolution. After the law abolishing all religious orders, the convent with its quaint cemetery, its luxurious gardens and fruit trees, was abandoned, serving as a sleeping place for those waifs who knew not from day to day what the next hour might bring forth. Its gnarled trees, overhanging the grim walls, tempted young Jean and Pierre to put into effect the

law which ruled France at the moment: that of making one's neighbour's worldly goods one's own. Unchecked by rebuke, they became bolder, and not even the ghostly terrors of the deserted graveyard kept the ragged little wretches from satisfying their appetites on the fruits which had been the *bonne bouches* of the absent nuns.

After the Terror had slain its thousands, and the spectacle of executions lost the charming flavour of novelty which at first made it so popular, the inhabitants of the rue Saint Honoré and the *quartier* through which the laden tumbrels daily passed on the way to the Place de la Révolution, petitioned the Committee to have the guillotine removed to another part of the city. After the entry, "Prairial, 25," M. Sanson, the more than famous "Monsieur de Paris," says:

"At last the brief of the inhabitants of the rue Saint Honoré has been granted. The day before yesterday, as I was going to bed, I was called to the Palais de Justice, where Royer, the substitute, ordered me to clear the Place de la Révolution of the scaffold, and take it to the Place de la Bastille. The carpenters worked all night. The public of this *quartier* had no liking for executions, for as soon as we appeared in the rue St. Antoine, with three carts full, we were hissed, and otherwise ill received. The inhabitants of the *quartier* St. Antoine are not so timid as those of the Place de la Révolution, and they made no secret of their disgust; when the execution took place almost everybody had gone away. The Committee have determined not to renew the experiment, and under the pretence that the Place de la Bastille is too good for aristocratic blood, they have directed the scaffold to be transferred to the Place du Trône. So we passed another sleepless night. We are now to send the corpses to the St. Marguerite cemetery." This new arrangement did not prove satisfactory—the plan of putting the unfortunate dead in the cemetery of St. Marguerite,

for again, less than a fortnight after, Sanson alludes to the matter.

"Messidor 1: The dead are beginning to frighten the living. The inhabitants of the Montreuil section, where we now send the dead bodies, have complained. They argue that the stench is horrible, and that unless the small cemetery of St. Marguerite is closed, serious consequences cannot but ensue. After much hesitation, the Committee has selected a new place for the burial of the executed. This is the garden of the old convent of Picpus. The spot seems to be ill chosen; the soil is composed of pure clay, and it cannot absorb what is deposited in it." So runs the history of the cemetery of Picpus, where so many noble dead sleep in silent harmony with those who were of the byways.

The enclosure, or field, was the property of the Princess of Hohenzollern, whose brother, the Prince of Salm-Kyrbourg, beheaded in the Terror, was buried there. His property, among which was the hotel (now rebuilt) belonging to the Legion of Honour, on the Quai d'Orsay, was confiscated, according to the practice of the day, being drawn in the National Lottery by a *coiffeur*. The princess refused the request of Mmes. de Lafayette and de Montagu, to "consecrate the ground to the common veneration of the many families whose members lay sleeping there." "She did not wish to relinquish her rights." There was, however, a chapel, and some fields adjoining, and these the sisters, with the many others interested, bought. It was leased to an order of Bernardine nuns, who had dedicated themselves to the perpetual adoration of the Holy Sacrament, their order, founded in 1425, being second only to the Carmelites in its dreadful severity and rigorous austerities. So, at last, the dead slept in consecrated ground. Mme. de Lafayette passed many hours in the little chapel, where the names of the victims are inscribed on tablets, in the order in which they appeared on the books of the Conciergerie,

weeping, and praying for the souls of those who had gone without hesitation to eternity. This interesting spot, with its harrowing memories, is situated near the old *mur d'octroi*, between the Barrière du Trône and the Barrière de Saint Mandé—now absorbed in the busy faubourg St. Antoine, and has—or had—a boarding school attached to it, where the nuns daily teach. It is still known as the cemetery of Picpus. At her request, Mme. de Lafayette was buried there—the spot for her grave being chosen by Mme. de Montagu—though it is usually to the tomb of her gallant husband that the steps of pilgrim and sightseer wend their way.

The health of Mme. de Lafayette was greatly impaired, for no woman, even of the most robust constitution, could have endured what she had been through without having some ill effects, leaving out that terrible, ageing mental anxiety, to which she had constantly been a prey. It is truly amazing the fortitude and endurance which those dreadful trials had developed in this delicate creature, who for years had been in a condition of such weakness and debility as to cause grave concern to her family. At present, she was very happy, and so cheerful that she constantly deceived the loving eyes watching her, and, in a great measure, kept them from suspecting how intensely she suffered. Always gay and bright, she took the keenest delight in the arrival of another grandchild, an event which thrilled her—before everything—maternal heart with joy: She renewed her youth in the daily cares, joys, and sorrows of her children and grandchildren, praying always that their lives might be less eventful and happier than hers had been. The next two years passed with rapidity, with such joy and peace, such tranquil evenness, that they almost ceased to count the days. To those who have suffered greatly, there comes a time when they may no longer feel with the keenness and emotion which was theirs in the beginning.

Nature can recuperate only to a certain point, and then, like a worn-out spring—snaps! "as the fountain which has played all night has not a drop of water left for the morning."

What a pity it is that there are so few details to be gathered of the life at Lagrange at this moment! As Napoleon had advised, this famous family remained in a

World forgetting, by the world forgot,

retirement, though the exactness of the latter part of the quotation may be questioned. Those were times of great conquest, and the men for the times were not wanting. Napoleon was the star on which the eyes of the civilised world centred. The family at Lagrange watched with others, but the France of their day and generation was rapidly changing.

Aged before her time by her many sufferings, Mme. de Lafayette was content to sit placidly, while the stirring events passed with panoramic swiftness before her. She calmly endured the anxieties of the campaign of 1805-6, expressing the greatest joy on receiving the news that her son George had the good fortune to save the life of his general at the battle of Eylau. Even happier was she when the Peace of Tilsit was proclaimed, and, having resigned his commission, he was free to come home for good. Her life was almost too happy to last. Under the iron hand of Napoleon conditions steadily improved. France seemed master of Europe—with the exception of a few sturdy little islands, across a strip of turbulent channel; but, best of all, they were together; a calm before a storm of sadness and grief.

"At the end of the spring of 1807 it seemed that God had accomplished all my mother's desires in this world," said her daughter. "She had nothing more to ask. Her husband was beside her; she was surrounded by her children and grandchildren. All

seemed awaiting some great event." It came. A few days after the return of her husband and son, on August 22, 1817, she was seized with terrible and violent pains and high fever. Such was the severity of this sudden attack that she never rallied, lapsing into a condition of much suffering and great weariness. When she attended mass in the chapel of Lagrange, on October 11th, it was for the last time, though they did not have any idea that her condition was so hopeless. Taking advantage of a slight turn for the better, she was taken to Mme. de Tessé's place, at Aulnay, which was only three leagues from Paris. Her sufferings at once increased so alarmingly that they carried her to Paris, to the house of her aunt, Mme. de Tessé. About this time, she remarked to those devoted attendants, her daughter Virginie and her daughter-in-law Emilie, during one of her paroxysms of pain:

"My present state mars your happiness, but it does not diminish mine."

This disorder attacked her brain in the most fearful manner, producing a state of extraordinary and peculiar delusion, but in a way entirely characteristic of her. She would sometimes make a mistake as to the position or occupation of her children, but clearly remembered each trait and peculiarity of their characters. She called one of her daughters to her side, in a moment of comparative calmness, asking her, anxiously: "Have you an idea of what the maternal feeling is? Are you like me? Do you know all its joys? Is there anything sweeter, deeper, stronger? Do you feel like me, the want of loving and being loved?"

As through her life, the hours shadowed by Azrael's angel were filled entirely by the thought of her "love for God and for my father," writes Virginie, and who can tell if perhaps her mind did not turn even more to her adored husband than to the heaven where she was so soon to be? Probably, perhaps, never, until these last hours, did he at all realise

the passionate devotion of which he had been so long the object. "The effect his presence produced on her, the choice of the words she used to express her love, with more confidence than she had ever shown before, how, with complete incoherence in her ideas, she followed up interests, which, though imaginary, were in keeping with her character and her opinions; the charm with which she spoke to him of God, and of religion—all this cannot be explained by words, and such a delirium could only be hers." All "those magnificent tendernesses, that unselfish love, kept back for thirty-four years, through fear that its ardour might tire or weary its object, she betrayed." Knowing her, loving her, as he did, it was a revelation to her husband. "God owed her the reward of permitting her time to reveal to you the depth of her tenderness," M. de Grammont said to his brother-in-law, who could scarcely control his emotion.

She rapidly grew worse and worse, the end coming almost without warning. Suddenly, in the midst of her delirium, she began to utter the words of Tobit's prayer, which she repeated three times, with slow and dreadful distinctness. This was the same prayer she had said on that morning of mingled sorrow and joy, when she first caught a glimpse of the prison towers of Olmütz; and showed to those surrounding her that her mind had wandered to the days whose privations had led her to the dire disease so soon to end that beautiful and blameless life. She died on Christmas Eve, 1807, as the midnight hour slowly rang over the world, which, for her, had contained so much sorrow. She had given her blessing to her family that morning. "I do not suffer," she murmured to her children. "May the peace of the Lord be with you!" But her last words were for the beloved one. Too weak to open her eyes for one last fond look, she groped around, and clasping the ready hand, she sought, with a faint flutter of the eyelids, in vain

effort, for one more look at the idolised love of her life, faintly murmured, "*Je suis toute à vous . . .*"

She had said to this world, "good night" and "good-by!"

. . . . . .

Letter from M. de Lafayette to M. de La Tour Maubourg.

January, 1808.

"I have not written to you, my dear friend, from the depth of misery in which I am plunged. You have already heard of the angelic end of that incomparable woman. I feel I must again speak of it to you. My grieved heart loves to open itself to the most constant, the dearest confidant of all its thoughts. As yet you have always found me stronger than circumstances, but now this event is stronger than me. Never shall I recover from it. During the thirty-four years of an union in which her tenderness, her goodness, the elevation of her mind, charmed, adorned, honoured my life, I felt myself so used to all that she was to me, that I could not distinguish it from my own existence. She was fourteen and I was sixteen, when her heart first amalgamated itself with everything that could interest me. I knew I loved her, I knew I needed her, but it is only now that I can distinguish what is left of me for the remainder of a life which I had thought was to have been entirely devoted to worldly matters. The foreboding of her loss had never crossed my mind before, when, on leaving Chavinac with George, I received a note from Mme. de Tessé. I was struck to the heart. On arriving in Paris after a rapid journey, we found her very ill; there was a slight improvement the next day, which I attributed to the pleasure of seeing us; but soon afterwards her head was affected. She said to Mme. de Simiane:

"'I was going to have a malignant fever, but I

shall be well attended to, and I shall get the better of it.' Unhappily it was not a malignant fever, it was something worse. One day only Corvisart had great hopes. Our dear invalid was beginning already to wander, when her confessor came to see her. In the evening she told me:

"'If I go to another dwelling, you know how much I shall think of you there. Although I shall leave you with reluctance, the sacrifice of my life would be little if it could assure your eternal happiness.'

"The day she received the sacrament, she was anxious to see me near her. Delirium came on afterwards; you never saw anything so extraordinary and so touching. Imagine, my dear friend, a mind completely disordered, thinking itself in Egypt, in Syria, amongst the events of the reign of Athalie, which Celestine's lessons had left in her imagination, strangely blending every idea that was not from the heart, in short the most constant delirium and withal that kindness which always seeks for something pleasing to say. There was also a refinement in the way she expressed herself, a loftiness of thought which astonished every one. But what was admirable above all, was that tenderness of heart which she was constantly showing to her six children, to her sister, to her aunt, to M. de Tessé; she thought she was with them at Memphis, for, by a miracle of feeling, her mind was never invariably fixed but where I was concerned. It seemed as if that impression was too deep to be obliterated, was stronger than sickness, stronger than death itself. Life had already fled; feeling, warmth, existence, all had taken refuge in the hand which pressed mine. Perhaps did she even yield to her affection and her tenderness more completely than if she had had the full possession of her faculties. Do not imagine that dear angel was alarmed at the thought of a future world. Her religion was all love and confidence; the fear of hell never came near her mind. She did not believe in it for be-

ings good, sincere and virtuous, whatever their opinions might be. 'I do not know what will happen at the moment of their death, she would say, 'but God will enlighten them.' However, had her mind been clearer, she would have thought of what she called her *péchés*, though she did not believe in any other divine punishment than that of being deprived of the sight of the Supreme Being. And how often have you heard me joking her about her *amiables hérésies*! Who knows if the fear of increasing my regret would not have partly restrained the outpouring of her feelings, in the same manner as when, during our married life, her utter unselfishness prevented her from yielding to what was most impassioned in her nature? 'There was a period,' she said a few months ago, 'when after one of your returns from America I felt myself so forcibly attracted towards you, that I thought I should faint every time you came into the room. I was possessed with the fear of annoying you, and tried to moderate my feelings. You can scarcely be dissatisfied with what remains.'

"'What gratitude I owe to God,' she would repeat during her illness, 'that such passionate feelings should have been a duty! How happy I have been!' She said the day of her death, 'What a lot to be your wife!' And when I spoke to her of my tenderness, she answered in a touching tone: 'Is it true? Is it indeed true? How good you are! Repeat it again, it does me so much good to hear you. If you do not find yourself sufficiently loved, lay the fault upon God. He has not given me more faculties than that I love you,' she said in the midst of her delirium, 'Christianly, humanly, passionately.'

"When she was pitied for her sufferings, the fear of exaggerating them to herself and to others would come upon her. One day I was watching her with a look of pity. 'Oh, I am overpaid,' she said, 'by that kind look!"

"She often begged of me to remain in the room because my presence calmed her. Sometimes, however, she would ask me to go and attend to my business, and when I answered that I had nothing else to do than to take care of her, 'How good you are!' she would exclaim with her feeble though *pénétrante* voice. 'You are too kind, you spoil me, I do not deserve all that; I am too happy.'

"... Her delirium was intense. It bore principally on the reign of Athalie, on the family of Jacob, in which she liked to persuade herself that I was tenderly beloved, on the connections of Israel and Judah. 'Would it not be strange,' she said, 'if being your wife, I was obliged to sacrifice myself for a king?'

"She was in fear of troubles, of proscriptions, and prepared herself to meet them with the fortitude which characterised her in real danger. She thought there was to be a persecution against Christians and reckoned upon me to protect the oppressed. 'It appears to me,' she said, 'that the world is beginning over again; nothing but fresh experiments. Why are not all things going according to your wishes?' All these thoughts were confused in her head; she believed we were in Egypt and Syria.

"We thought once her ravings would cease. 'Am I not mad?' she exclaimed. 'Come nearer, tell me if I have lost my reason?' I answered that I should be very sorry to take all the kind things she had said to me for absurdities. 'Have I said anything kind? But I have also said many silly things; have we not acted the tragedy of Athalie? What! I am married to the sincerest of men, and I cannot know the truth. It is still your kindness; you want to spare my head. Do speak. I am resigned to the disgrace of being mad.' We succeeded at length in calming her. I told her she was valued and loved. And she answered: 'I do not care to be valued, so that I am loved.' Another time she said: 'Fancy what a state

my poor head is in; what an odd thing that I cannot remember whether Virginie and M. de Lasteyrie are betrothed or united. Help me to collect my thoughts.'

"Sometimes we could hear her praying in her bed. She made her daughters read prayers to her. There was something heavenly in the manner she twice repeated Tobit's prayers, applicable to her state, the same she had recited to her daughters on seeing the steeples of Olmütz for the first time. I approached her. 'It is from the book of Tobit,' she said. 'I sing badly, that is why I recite it.' Another time she composed a most beautiful prayer which lasted fully an hour. She only once or twice seemed in error about me, persuading herself that I was a fervent Christian. 'You are not a Christian,' she said one day, and as I did not answer: "Oh, I know what you are, you are a *Fayettiste*!' 'Do you think me so presumptuous?' I replied, 'But are you not a little *Fayettiste* yourself?' 'Oh, yes!' she exclaimed, 'with all my heart and soul; I feel I could die for that sect.'

". . . One day I was speaking to her of her angelic gentleness. 'Yes,' she said, 'God made me gentle, though my gentleness is not like yours; I have not such high pretensions. You are so strong as well as so gentle; you see things from so high, but I will allow that I am gentle, and you are very good to me.' 'It is you who are good,' I answered, 'and generous above all. Do you remember my first departure for America? Everybody against me; and you hiding your tears at M. de Ségur's marriage. You tried not to appear in grief for fear of bringing down more blame upon me.' 'True,' she said, 'it was rather nice for a child. But how kind of you to remember so far back.'

"She spoke very sensibly of her daughters' happiness, of the good and noble characters of her sons-in-law. 'Nevertheless I have not been able to make them as happy as I am. It would have required all

God's power to have brought about that again.' It is not to boast, my dear friend, that I tell you all this, though one might well be proud of it, but I find comfort in repeating to you and to myself how tender and how happy she was.'

"How happy she would have been this winter! All her children near her, the war finished for George and Louis, the birth of Virginie's child, and, I may add, after an illness, which, owing to our past fears, would have made her doubly dear to us. Had she not, to the last, the kindness of thinking of my amusements at Lagrange, of my farm, of all that was of daily interest to me! When I spoke of her returning home: 'Ah,' she said, 'that would be too delicious. My God, my God!' she exclaimed. 'Six more poor years of Lagrange!' She wanted to return there with me, and begged of me to start before her. I entreated her to allow me to stay, and asked her to rest a little. She promised to do her best, and became calmer. 'Well,' she said, 'remain; await a little; I shall go quietly to sleep.'

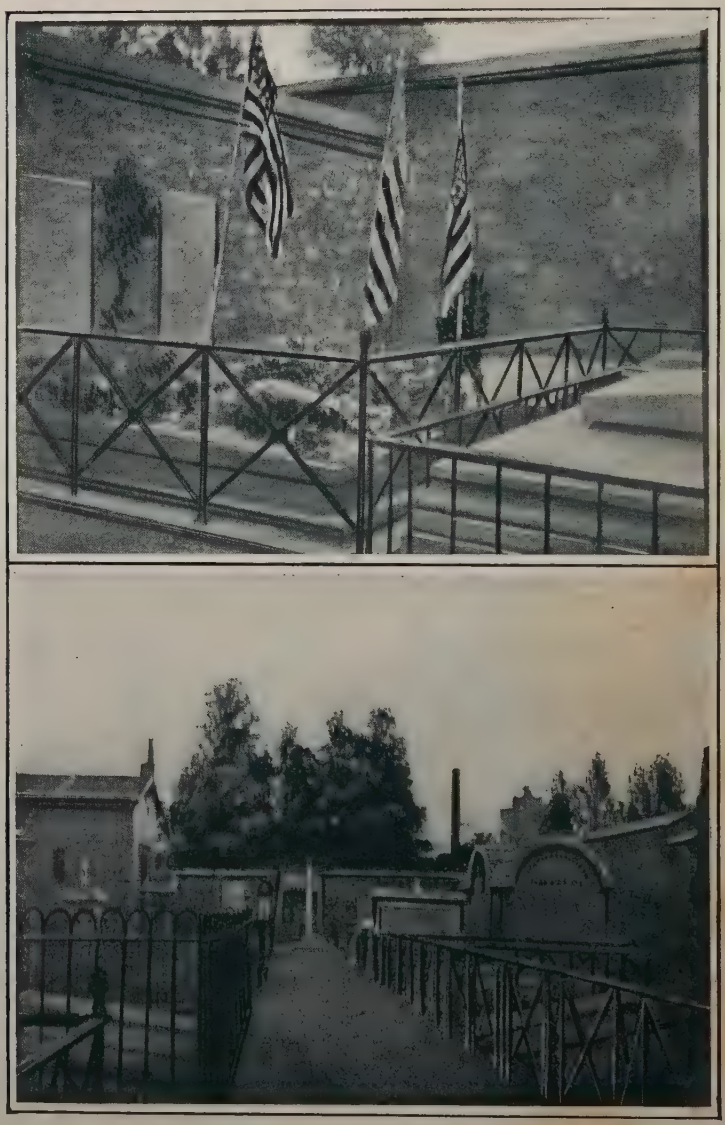
"The disordered state of her mind did not prevent her having misgivings as to her approaching end. The night which preceded the last, I heard her saying to her nurse: 'Do not leave me; tell me when I am about to die.' At my approach her fears subsided; but when I spoke to her of recovery, of returning to Lagrange: 'Oh, no, I am going to die. Have you any cause of complaint against me?'—'For what, my dear? You have always been so good and so loving.'—'Have I then been a gentle companion to you?'—'Yes, assuredly.'—'Well, then, give me your blessing.'

"On all these last evenings, when she thought I was going to leave her, she would ask me for my blessing. I spoke to her of the happiness of our union, of my tenderness; she took pleasure in hearing me repeat the assurances of my love. 'Promise me,' she said, 'to preserve that affection forever; promise me.'

You may well believe that I promised. 'Are you satisfied with your children?' she added. I told her how completely they satisfied me. 'They are very good,' she said. 'Support them with all your love for me.' Then delirium coming on again: 'How do you think they feel with regard to the house of Jacob?' I assured her that they entered into her own feelings. 'Ah,' she said, 'my feelings are very moderate, except those I have for you.'

"Twice only her excitement became intense. It was then the wanderings of maternal love. One day George, to prevent her speaking too much, had for several hours kept away from her room. When he came in again, she evidently thought he had just returned from the army. The wildness of her joy made her heart beat in a fearful manner. Another time she fell into an ecstasy of joy at the thought of an anniversary dear to our hearts, of the day, when, twenty-eight years before, she had given me George. That anniversary was the day of her death.

"One cannot admire sufficiently the meekness, the patience, the unchanging kindness of that angelic woman during this long and cruel malady. In her delirium, which lasted a whole month, she was always thinking of us and fearing to importune her friends. 'I am very troublesome, she would often say. 'My children,' she one day added, 'must make up their minds to have a silly mother, since you are willing to have such a silly wife.' But never the slightest sign of impatience or of ill-humour. Even when it was most repugnant to her to drink anything, a word from me, or from her children, or, in our absence, the idea that the nurses might be blamed, sufficed to decide her, and, up to the last, each service was acknowledged by a kind word, a motion of the head or of the hand. 'Never,' the doctor said, 'have I seen in the course of a long practice anything to be compared with that adorable disposition and to a delirium so extraordinary. No,



The grave of Mme. de La Fayette is at the left, by the wall; that of her husband shows the flags and flowers placed there on Decoration Day by American residents

View of the Cemetery of Picpus, showing the burial place of the La Fayettes at the extreme right corner. Beyond the gate are buried the victims of the Place du Trône

never have I seen anything which could give me the idea that human perfection could go so far.'

"A few minutes before she breathed her last, she murmured to us that she was not suffering. 'No doubt she does not suffer,' exclaimed the nurse. 'She is an angel.'

"It was remarkable to what a degree her wanderings corresponded with the different shades of her affection. When I was concerned her judgment was always sound. Though placing us in the most fantastic situations, her mind was never at fault with respect to my principles and feelings. She would exclaim: 'Decide; you are the leader; it is our happy lot to obey you.' One day when I was attempting to calm her she gaily repeated this verse:

"'"À vos sage conseils, Seigneur, je m' abandonne.' . . .

With respect to our children, I speak of all six, whom she always recognised and welcomed, whom she always spoke to in the kindest and most loving manner, and whose various characters and dispositions ever remained clearly present to her mind. There was still something less lucid in her thoughts than with regard to me. As to her grandchildren, she spoke of them several times to me with charming details; but more frequently her ideas were confused with respect to their number, their existence, and even the sex of the two last. She was most affectionate throughout to her sister, Mme. de Montagu; she frequently inquired from us both, how her mother was . . . fancying we had seen her lately. We shuddered on hearing her calmly say on the morning of her death: 'To-day I shall see my mother.'

"Our dear Mme. de Tessé, who had been ill during the last weeks, and obliged to keep her room, wished to see her during her sleep. Ah, my friend, in what a state was that poor Mme. de Tessé on leav-

ing the room! Her niece, knowing that she was ill, thought, in her delirium, that she was in a fit state to be carried near her bed. She spoke of M. de Tessé's health (he also was unwell) as if she had been in full possession of her faculties; she told me to go and take care of him. 'I am sure my uncle is pleased to have us all around him. Is it not troublesome for my aunt,' she said one day, 'to have us all here?' 'Certainly not,' I answered, laughing, 'we are only sixteen in number.' 'It is true,' she added, 'that my aunt must be as pleased to have us as we are to enjoy her hospitality.' The last day she told me: 'When you see Mme. de Simiane, give her my love.' Thus her heart was all life when her poor limbs were already numbed by approaching death.

"I have already told you without any particulars that she had received the sacraments. I was present during the ceremony, which was more painful to us than to herself, for she had already taken the sacrament in her bed a short time previously.

"The next day, before she became quite speechless, Mme. de Montagu and my daughters, fearing that my presence might keep her from praying at her ease, asked me to leave them. My first impulse was to refuse their request, however tenderly and timidly made; I had a passionate desire to occupy her thoughts exclusively. However, I repressed my feelings, and gave up my place to her sister. I was scarcely gone when she called me back. So soon as I got back, she took my hand in hers, saying: '*Je suis toute à vous.*' These were her last words.

"It has been said that she often lectured me. That was not her way. She frequently expressed in the course of her delirium the idea that she would go to heaven. She told me several times: 'This life is short and full of troubles; let us unite in God, and depart together for eternity. She wished us all, and me in particular, the peace of the Lord. Such is the man-

ner in which that dear angel expressed herself during her illness, as well as in the will she had made a few years ago, and which is a model of refinement, of elevation of mind, and of eloquence from the heart.

" It seems as if by dwelling on these details I was trying to defer that last period, when, on seeing the doctor giving up all hopes of her recovery, and only thinking of prolonging life, we felt that for her there was to be no to-morrow. Until then, we had only appeared before her two or three at a time, but that day, as she seemed to be seeking for us, we saw no harm in admitting all the members of the family, who seated themselves in a semicircle before her, so that she could see every one.

" ' What a pleasant sight,' she said, while looking on us with complacency.

" She called for her daughters in turn, and had a charming word for each of them. She gave them each her blessing. I feel confident that she was happy during that morning. And how should the last moments be otherwise than calm for her, whose piety, far from being troubled by terrors and scruples, never ceased to be, all the time of her illness, before and during her delirium, all love and gratitude for the blessings, to use her own words, which God had bestowed and was still bestowing on her; for who, notwithstanding the state of her brain, never lost a single *jouissance* which a heart such as hers could feel? Her delirium ever became less confused. Instead of asking Mme. de Montagu how my mother was, she told her: ' I look upon you as having succeeded to her.'

" No doubt she felt that the last moment was approaching, when after having told me in so touching a manner: ' Have you been happy with me? Are you still kind enough to love me? well, then give me your blessing,' she gave me hers, for the first and last time, in a solemn and loving manner. Then her six children, each in turn, kissed her hand and face. She looked

at them with inexpressible tenderness. Still more surely had she the idea of her approaching end, when, fearing a convulsion, as I believe, she made me a sign to step back; and as I remained near her, she laid my hand on her eyes with a look of tender gratitude, thus giving me to understand what was the last duty she expected from me.'

"We felt during these hours of gentle agony a struggle between the want of expressing our love, which she enjoyed so much, and the belief that these emotions wore out the little that was left in her of life. I kept in my words with nearly as much care as I repressed my sobs, when the touching expression of her eyes, a few scarcely uttered words, tore from my lips the feelings with which my heart was bursting. She revived, and found strength to exclaim: 'Is it then true? you have loved me! How happy I am! Kiss me.' She raised her poor arms, which were almost lifeless, with wonderful animation. She passed one around my neck, and drawing my head towards hers, she pressed me to her heart, repeating: 'What a blessing! how happy I am to be yours!' Until her right hand became motionless, she carried mine successively to her lips and to her heart. My left hand did not leave hers, and as long as she breathed I could feel that pressure which seemed still to mean: '*Je suis toute à vous.*'

"We all surrounded her bed, which had been drawn into the middle of the room. She motioned to her sister to sit down by her. Her three daughters were continually applying hot towels to her hands and arms to preserve the last remnant of warmth. We knelt down, following the slow motion of her breath. There was no appearance of pain, the smile of benevolence was playing upon her lips, my hand was still within hers, and thus this angel of goodness and love breathed her last. We bathed with tears the remains of that adorable being. I felt myself dragged away

by M. de Mun, and M. de Tracy, and so bade my last farewell to her and to all happiness on earth. . . .

"On Monday that angelic woman was borne to the spot near which repose her grandmother, her mother, and her sister, among sixteen hundred other victims."

. . . . .

"We found in her writing book a letter to me written in 1785, several injunctions made in 1792, and an official will of 1804. This memorandum, which was only a rough copy, was nevertheless a masterpiece of tenderness, of refinement, and of heartfelt eloquence. It speaks of religion with touching sublimity.

"I love, my dear friend, to confide to your bosom all these recollections of the past, for what else now remains, save recollections of that adorable woman to whom I owed during thirty-four years an ever enduring and unalloyed happiness? She was attached to me, I may say, by the most ardent feelings, yet never did I perceive in her the slightest shade of selfishness, of displeasure, of jealousy. If I look back to the days of our youth, how many unexampled proofs of delicacy come to my mind! She was associated heart and soul with all my political wishes and opinions, and Mme. de Tessé might well say that her devotion was a mixture of the catechism and the *Déclaration des Droits*. I must again refer to an expression of her aunt's, who said to me yesterday: 'I never could have believed that it was possible to be so fanatic of your opinions, and at the same time so devoid of party spirit.'

"You know as well as I do, all she was and all she did during the Revolution. It is not for having come to Olmütz, as Charles Fox so elegantly expresses it, on the wings of duty and of love, that I mean to praise her now, it is for having remained in France until she secured, as far as lay in her power, the material comforts of my aunt, and the rights of my creditors; it is for having had the courage to send George to America.

What noble imprudence to remain the only woman in France endangered by the name she bore, but who always refused to change it! Each of her petitions began by these words: *La femme Lafayette.* Indulgent as she was to calumny and party hatred, never did she allow, even at the foot of the scaffold, a reflection upon me to pass without protesting against it. She had prepared herself to speak in that spirit before the tribunal, and we have all seen how good, simple, and easy in common life was that lofty-minded and courageous woman. Her piety was also of a peculiar nature. I may say that during thirty-four years I never once experienced from it the slightest shadow of inconvenience. No affectation in her religious practices, which were always subordinate to my convenience. I have had the satisfaction of seeing the least pious of my friends as well received, as much esteemed, and their virtues as fully acknowledged by her, as if there had been no difference of religious opinions between her and them. Never did she express to me anything but the hope, the conviction, that upon mature reflection, with the uprightness of heart she knew I possessed, I should end by being convinced. The recommendations which she has left me are in the same spirit, entreating me to read, for the love of her, several books which certainly I shall examine again with the most solemn attention. She used to call religion sovereign liberty, to make me appreciate it more, and often repeated to me with pleasure these words of Abbé Fanchet: 'Jesus Christ my only master' (*Jésus Christ mon seul maître.*)

"This letter would never come to an end, my dear friend, if I gave way to the feelings which inspire it. I shall only add that that angelic woman has, at least, been surrounded with love and regret worthy of her. . . .

"*Adieu*, my dear friend, with your help I have borne sorrows great and hard to endure, to which the

name of misfortune might have been given until the greatest of all misfortunes had been experienced. But though absorbed in the deepest grief, though given up to one thought, one devotion not of this world, though still more than ever I feel the want to believe that all does not die with us, I still appreciate the pleasure of friendship; and what a friendship is yours, my dear Maubourg!

"I embrace you in her name, in my own, in the name of all you have been to me, since we have known each other.

"*Adieu*, my dear friend,

"LAFAYETTE."

. . . . .

Thus, in her forty-eighth year, died Arienne de Noailles, *La femme Lafayette.*

Notes

LETTER WRITTEN TO DR. BOLLMAN, BY MME. DE LAFAYETTE, FROM THE PRISON OF OLMÜTZ

Olmütz, May 22, 1796.

I am at last enabled to write to you, and to express to you all the sentiments with which we are so deeply affected. The first wish of my heart is to assure you of our gratitude. I am likewise eager to express my regret for having been unable to address you sooner. In the prisons of Paris I had been informed of your generous undertaking, and I was aware that you and M. Huger were in custody; but we had been, and still were, in France; exposed to such tyrannical oppression—such efforts were made to annihilate the recollection of one whose principles and whose example brought to mind the duty of resistance to that oppression, and terror had so completely paralysed every heart, that it was impossible, especially in my personal position, to obtain many details respecting M. Lafayette and yourself. Besides, I was myself overwhelmed by the most appalling calamities that can be inflicted on the heart of a daughter and a sister, and I felt the necessity of coming to this place, in order to regain a portion of my faculties, and to recover my strength.

I at length obtained a passport for the United States, and an American vessel conveyed me to Hamburg, whence I ought to have written to you; but as I had received in that city only an imperfect account of all that referred to you; as I was, moreover, persuaded by what I heard at Vienna, that I could easily correspond from this place, and as I confess that myself and

my daughters were completely taken up with the idea of arriving here, we thought that the expression of our sensibility would be more agreeable to you in the name of all four; and you may easily imagine, that from the first moment of our meeting, we had to satisfy the impatience of M. Lafayette to hear of you. From him we learned, with intense interest and admiration, all the circumstances which we had previously known but in part. We were informed of all that you had done in Russia; we were aware of the time, the efforts, and the address which it must have cost you at Olmütz to correspond with him; we were apprised of your courageous attempt, but we were ignorant of the generosity with which you adopted Lafayette's idea, and the zeal with which you facilitated his flight, when every mode of serving him at Vienna was exhausted. It is impossible for me to describe to you how much we were affected by all the details of that day, on which you and M. Huger displayed such intrepidity, such delicacy, such indifference to your own personal safety, and such undivided devotion to the idea of saving the man who spoke to us of your efforts with such well merited enthusiasm. He would fain himself explain to you how—after stopping on the road, in spite of what you had told him, to see you on horseback—obliged afterwards to walk, because the blood and filth with which he was covered attracted attention;—having stopped again, and even, in his uneasiness for both of you, having for a moment retraced his steps, he was forced to return to Sternberg;—and how, having reason to believe that you had proceeded across the fields, he endeavoured to overtake you before your arrival in that place, although he suffered severely from his first fall;—how, in a word, being unacquainted with the name of Hoff, and not knowing the direct road to Silesia by which he had arrived in a carriage, and being unable to ask many questions without exciting observation, especially on account of the singularity of his appearance,—he was in the end arrested. He then, at least, had the momentary consolation of believing that you had both escaped; for it was only at Olmütz that he heard of M. Huger's arrest, and he was not certain even of yours till he underwent the interrogatory, to which, through consideration

for both of you, he consented to reply; and in the course of which, having refused to speak on the secret correspondence, it was found necessary to prove to him that the surgeon and yourself had disclosed everything. I shall make no effort to describe to you his feelings during your horrible captivity. Though we found him recovered, especially since he had been informed of your deliverance, it was but too evident how much his heart had suffered from the tortures so basely inflicted on him—tortures which even to me, who had been in France the witness and the victim of the most atrocious and tyrannical anarchy, appeared the most cruel refinement of barbarity that hatred could conceive.

Your feeling heart, Sir, will judge of the effect produced on us in this desolate situation of Lafayette, by the moment of our union, by the consolations which we were able to afford him, and at the same time by the sad news of which it was my lot to inform him; for never was a common sentiment of suffering more just or better felt. I also refrain from speaking of his situation previously to our arrival, or of that which we at present share with him: my former letter to our friends will inform you of both, and also of our apprehensions for his health and that of his companions. But how can I avoid dwelling on the deep feeling of gratitude with which we acknowledge ourselves indebted to you for the assistance of those generous and zealous friends who, during an entire year, watched the moment for transmitting a few lines into this tomb, and who, since my arrival, have formed an indispensable link between us and the rest of the world! Why cannot I express to you all our obligations to them; with the individual who conducted a delicate affair at Vienna; with him who undertook a long and painful journey, but one in every respect essential to our interests; with those, who, remaining still nearer to us, watch over our well-being; and, above all, with the friend towards whom our inexpressible obligations are daily augmented; who has so many just claims to our confidence, and whom we cherish with the cordial and entire affection of our hearts.

It would have been gratifying to us to have profited sooner by this opportunity of writing to you, but our friend's first note

informed us that you had already passed the ocean, and that, to thank you for the many great services which you have rendered us in Europe, we must wait till you have placed us under fresh obligations in America. We are assured that you will be in London in the month of June, and as our confidence in you is, like your interest for us, unlimited, I shall communicate to you our ideas on the subject, with which you are so zealously and so unremittingly occupied. Our friends absolutely require that M. Lafayette's writing shall not go abroad, but you will be gratified to learn that my letter has at least the advantage of being written near him, and of being the faithful expression of all his feelings.

You are so well acquainted with the circumstances which preceded, accompanied and followed the arrest of M. Lafayette and his two friends; you have so actively participated in all the steps taken in their behalf; you are so well aware of the best way of serving them in every country; and we already owe so much to your courage, your intelligence, and your generous devotion, that it might seem more appropriate to speak to you only of our gratitude. Should you be at a loss for any details of what took place from the month of August, 1792, to the undertaking of the 8th November, and from the period of your deliverance to the present moment, you will find the former information in M. Lafayette's private correspondence with Mme. d'Henin, in some letters to myself which M. Masson was to send to London, one of March 27, 1793, to M. d'Archenholtz, and one of June 4th, to M. Pinkney, to Mme. d'Henin, to General Fitzpatrick, to M. Lafayette's aides-de-camp, and from a copy of my ministerial correspondence, taken by my daughter. You will also find some details in M. de Maubourg's private letters. Here, however, I will repeat to you, what it is no doubt superflous to mention, but what your inexhaustible friendship will not be weary of hearing. Lafayette's detention is evidently a measure entered into in common by the powers either openly or secretly allied against France, or rather against liberty. It is said to have been agreed upon in the coalitionary council that his existence was dangerous to the repose of the governments of Europe. As long as those governments transferred from one

to the other his person, and those of his friends, or the applications urged in their behalf, it was more difficult to form a plan; but at present most of them have become the friend or at least the humble servants of France. The pretenders of the Bourbon family are now regarded as mere objects of charity; and though the Emperor, in permitting my presence here, told me that Lafayette's affair was extremely complicated; though M. de Thugut, in speaking of him, frequently mentioned the word "importance," it is quite certain that, notwithstanding the hatred of all the other governments, the cabinets of Vienna and London are the only ones that can persecute us here. You know that the court of Vienna, in addition to its hereditary aversion for every species of liberty, has a particular antipathy to Lafayette, and that to all the known motives for that dislike may be added the secret impressions that have been constantly given by the late queen, or on her behalf. The conduct observed towards the three prisoners, towards you and ourselves, does not depend on the disposition of that court, but the malevolent action appears concentrated in the internal cabinet; and I might hope for some advantages, were not that party itself, as the letters from Vienna state, in the servile dependence of England. In that quarter is Lafayette's principal enemy to be found: Pitt and he have long formed a judgment of each other; and that minister, who is no less perverse in his means of execution than in his views, has every kind of superiority over the governments under his direction. But to consider the two courts apart, you are better acquainted than I am with the means which lead to a determination in the court of Vienna. Such means are not those used by society, which, however, ought not to be neglected (and amongst which I shall rank those of my friends, Mmes. de Windishgrätz and d'Ursel, and the good Prince de Rosemberg), nor those of such ministers as are without influence, such as M. Cobenzel, who has not ventured to see me, although his cousin, who has a numerous list of acquaintances, and amongst people belonging to every party, has been extremely obliging to me. You, as well as we, can conceive that the justice of the applications from America, the testimonies of friendship which we receive from other countries,

and the reproaches publicly made to our gaolers, must be of great advantage. The denunciations made by the opposition party in England also produce much effect on these courts, which perceive among that opposition the members of a future ministry. The Danish minister is said to be very well disposed towards us, and you have seen American addresses, the bare publication of which would be in every respect of the greatest advantage; but we think, with you, that no success is to be obtained at Vienna, except by means of intrigue and money. Some advances have already been made, and there has been a question, tolerably *a propos*, of 120,000 francs, for which my fortune is answerable; and as the only safeguard to be found here lies in the diplomatic character, we have thrown out the idea of obtaining a slight Danish commission for a friend, who might come to urge this negotiation in concert with those who have already had the courage to try it.

I know not what instructions you may have brought from the United States, but it is very certain that the presence of an American envoy, besides the advantage of the step itself, would have that of furnishing an opportunity, a pretext, a sort of protection for all the measures which might be secretly adopted in our favour. It is true that England, considered either as a power or as a banker, would always be the stronger, and to force her to relax her hold, she must be pressed at home. There at least public opinion is of some weight, and as our object should be not to caress or persuade Mr. Pitt, but to make him feel more personal inconvenience from Lafayette's detention than from his liberation, no means must be neglected of exciting public opinion against him in that respect. There can be no doubt that the extent and nature of the trade between England and the United States and the intimate connection existing between the American merchants and their associates in London and other cities, present great facilities for effecting the object to be gained. I speak of this matter with the more confidence, as among all the private individuals I have seen, I have ever found a sincere desire to do, to sign and even to pay all for the benefit of their fellow citizens. As to the official applications, you are probably the bearer of something precise, and though Lafayette

persists in demanding that no description of interest should be sacrificed to his own, he thinks it due to the dignity of the United States, that all applications made in their name should be firm, simple and clear (even should failure be the consequence), and indisputable on the score of equity and justice. I will add that if American influence at Vienna is limited to the courteous consideration which two countries at peace owe to each other, such is not the case with England, to whom the situation, commerce, and policy of the United States are of too much importance to admit of the supposition that the British cabinet is not interested in treating them with consideration. The faults committed in this way by the English ministry are properly taken up by the patriots in England, and we must here repeat what Lafayette has incessantly observed, that manifestations of kindly feeling from the friends of liberty in every country, can teach nothing to our enemies which they do not already know, and that such manifestations from the opposition have always appeared not only extremely flattering and valuable to himself, but advantageous to his interests. In his opinion the only precaution to be taken should be to communicate to his defenders such papers and information as may prevent involuntary inaccuracies, or even well-meant alterations of his position. Permit us also to repeat that, Lafayette, with a feeling of the tenderest gratitude towards his friends, merely requires from them in the name of their very friendship, that they will never speak of him except in a manner strictly conformable to the principles and sentiments which have so constantly inspired every thought, word, and action of his whole life; but whilst just complaints may everywhere be made, that in the deliverance of all the prisoners of the Revolution, Lafayette and his two friends were alone excepted, it must be admitted that the case is calculated to occasion scandal, rather than surprise. M. —— was one of the principal Jacobins, only after their creation, six months after the 11th July, 1789, and he then became the principal confidant of the secret correspondence between the court of Vienna and the Tuilleries: his detention astonishes me, and not his liberation. Lafayette, who is more than a stranger to these two means, and who as well

as Messrs. de Maubourg and Pusy, has always been hated by the Jacobins and both courts, was unable to make any application except to the friends of Liberty, who were oppressed everywhere. I am also greatly astonished that the Convention, having the advantage of their cannon, the only thing held respectable by such people, should have so long delayed enforcing the restoration of an ambassador, seized in a neutral state, of a military general, sold by Dumauriez, and of deputies who became victims to the same treacherous conduct. You will say, that amongst those deputies were two or three of the King's murderers; but had they been, I will not say Danton, for he belonged to those courts, but even Robespierre, and Marat, what are the crimes of such men, when contrasted with a life devoted to the vindication and defense of the rights of humanity in every country—when counterbalanced by the declaration of rights, by the duty of resistance to oppression, by that institution of the National Guards, so formidable, whether imitated or not imitated, and by so many efforts to place liberty and equality under the safeguard of legal order? All that Lafayette has effected for justice and humanity, for the National sovereignty and the constitutional authorities, are so many additional wrongs towards those who desire to see France disorganised, the cause of the people sullied, and liberty set at naught. The situation of MM. de Maubourg and Pusy has not given them so many opportunities of exciting hatred; but setting aside the fact that their tender and generous friendship demands that their cause shall not be for an instant separated from us, they no doubt are also detested, since they have always endeavoured to establish that virtuous liberty which confers happiness on a nation, and sets an example to neighbouring states.

It is not from our friends, who are not likely to be discouraged, that we should dissemble obstacles and dangers; it is not by voluntarily closing their eyes, that they can prevent our enemies from seeing, nor by entering into the combination of honourable minds, that they can guess the purpose of unfriendly governments. It is not necessary to tell you, that if Lafayette were not to be liberated before the peace, or at least in accordance with those preliminaries which are executed

before the conclusion, there is no species of chicanery, pretext, or even fatal resolution which may not be apprehended from those fatal governments! When I see, on the one hand, our reasonings and our hopes so often deceived, on the other hand, so many examples of the iniquitous conduct to which I have alluded; when I think that many of our means will be less influential upon peace in this country, and that the probable events of Europe may become fresh motives for our further detention; I no longer foresee anything certain, except the continuance of an inveterate hatred, the apprehensions of tyranny, and the facility of acting upon them. These alarms will not appear imaginary to you, Sir, who have taken so much pains in different countries and with different parties to make yourself acquainted with Lafayette's real situation. You will not be tranquillised by a recent and secret information, of the truth of which you can entertain no doubt, which as wholly devoted to Pitt, no later than a fortnight ago, represented Lafayette as dangerous to the public tranquillity of Europe—an expression that must be referred, not to the war which now exists, but to the liberty which is now dreaded, and that recalls, almost word for word, your interesting conversation with M. Luchesni which was held nearly four years ago in the council of the coalesced parties, and which was recently disclosed by an act of indiscretion on the part of Baron de Breteuil, who was present. This is not a reason for stifling the interests of the friends of liberty, which would occasion the loss of means no less honourable than advantageous, without the slightest benefit, but it is a powerful reason why no measure should be delayed, no expense spared, in order that, should negotiations take place, our release may precede the definitive conclusion of a treaty of peace.

Our friends, I trust, as well as ourselves, are of opinion that, whilst every method is energetically put into practice in London to oblige the government, and especially Pitt, to retreat, and whilst all official and secret means are actively employed at Vienna; it is also expedient that, should the belligerent powers order a meeting of their envoys in any particular place, an individual should be there, on whom the utmost dependence can be placed, and who may be authorised in the name of the

United States, to demand Lafayette in a firm tone, and to decide upon a preliminary article; after which nothing will remain to be done than to proceed thither without delay, and urge its speedy execution. But we implore the Americans to recollect that Messrs. de Maubourg and de Pusy form but one with ourselves, that the announcement of their intention during an imprisonment of four years, suffered for the cause of liberty, to become citizens of the United States on their release, already confers upon them the rights of such citizenship; and that the formal addition of our two friends, which may then be easily obtained, is nevertheless an indispensable precaution that must be taken to render our deliverance complete. You will ask me, as having lately quitted Paris, what, in a congress of peace, the deputies of the two republics would do for us? If the deputy of Holland is a sincere patriot, he must for the last ten years have had relations with Lafayette, either through himself or through his friends, and you might become acquainted with him through M. Adams, or at Hamburg through M. Aberna. With regard to France, which is a more delicate subject, I proceed to say a few words to you in confidence.

It is unquestionable that with the exception of the Aristocrats and the Disorganisers, Lafayette had the entire nation in his favour, and that the little which that immense majority effected to assist him and to prevent so many evils, is but too well explained by what the nation has since suffered collectively and in detail. That, however, necessarily produced comparisons and recollections, and certain calculations as to how much less the same successes abroad might have cost, but it will not promote our deliverance,—first, because the citizens, who are still disturbed by the recollection of that cruel period of inquisition and tyranny, dare not express their thoughts, and because, although our principal adversaries have joined the enemy or put an end to each other, there are still men in existence who are interested in setting aside all that may attract attention to their past crimes, and to the real source of calamity; secondly, because Lafayette, though not obstinately attached to the secondary combinations of governments (that which he was bound to maintain having been no longer conformable to his

inclinations), though far removed from all these intrigues, of which liberty is not the sole object, and though more independent than ever, in consequence of his resolution to proceed to America, will never consent that his friends in France (and there are a few whom he will empower to act for him) should hazard a single word in his name, or even in his behalf, that might in the slightest degree compromise those lofty principles of liberty and justice which he has ever defended; that might omit to mark the proper place of such as have violated those principles, and of such as have died for them; or that might give the name of error to a well-advised fidelity to those eternal rights of humanity, the declaration of which was, in the Revolution, one of his first services, and his inflexibility respecting which appears to him a duty, not only to himself, but to France.

You will judge from what proceeds, that we can count only upon a general article for the deliverance of all the prisoners; there are, however, many whose intentions towards us are excellent, and who are as well known to Lafayette's aides-de-camp as to myself. If, for instance, matters should pass through M. Barthelmy's hands, I must own, that in addition to our opinion in his favour, which is of long standing, we have had recent assurances of his disposition to befriend us as far as lies in his power. You are perhaps already aware that M. de Pusy's mother-in-law has married M. Dupont, one of our oldest friends, and that we have a brother-in-law in France, M. de Grammont, who possesses our unlimited confidence in every particular.

We await with much impatience the details of your voyage to America. We also ask you for news of my son, from whom we have not heard since the month of August, and who, I hope, has had the happiness of embracing you, and also M. Huger, to whom I dare not write, any more than to my son, being anxious to avoid exposing the secrets and the destiny of our friends to the accidents of so long a journey.

You would render us a vast additional service if you could transmit to the excellent and generous M. Huger the expression of our gratitude, admiration, and regard, and the assurance of the feelings with which Lafayette is inspired by the idea of owing

the highest possible obligations to the son of the first man who received him, and of the first friend whom he possessed in America. Will you have the kindness to undertake to speak to M. Pinkney of our grateful attachment to him, and also of our confidence, and to say a thousand kind things to our charming friend Mrs. Church? We are too well assured of her husband's friendship not to feel assured that he is wholly occupied with our affairs.

Adieu, Sir. When shall we be able to speak to you in person of the feelings which we so justly entertain towards you, and of which our hearts must forever be so deeply sensible?

NOAILLES-LAFAYETTE.

THE PRISON OF LA PETITE-FORCE

The Prison de la Petite-Force, formerly the Hôtel de Brienne, adjoined that of the Grande-Force, of which it formed a part, and was remarkable for its characteristic gateway built by the architect, Desmaisons. It was situated in the rue Pavée-Saint-Antoine, number 22.

When, in 1785, the prison of Saint Martin, which had been the Prison and House of Correction for the *filles de Paris*, was demolished, these unfortunates were transferred to the Hôtel de Brienne, now called *la Petite-Force*, where they were to be punished, not alone for pursuing their terrible profession, but also for various other misdemeanours of a similar nature.

The following were the misdemeanours punishable by prison: if these girls displeased their "matron" or the police agent who ruled them; if they passed beyond the limits of the streets where they were obliged to live; or, if they by their behaviour occasioned any disturbance, they were arrested.

On entering this place of detention the appearance of these women underwent a complete metamorphosis. They were immediately shorn of whatever charms they previously had, and were garbed in the uniform of the prison; the taffetas, the linens were replaced by fustian, the beflowered hats by a head-dress of coarse cloth, and their elegant slippers by sabots.

They drank and became intoxicated; they caroused; they

quarrelled and fought; they smoked pipes, and, to warm themselves in winter, danced "rondes." They occupied themselves with spinning, sewing and other feminine occupations.—*Histoire de Paris. Dulaure, Vol. VII*, 265.

Of the arrival of Mme. de Lafayette at the prison of le Plessis, the Duchesse de Duras says:

". . . An escort from la Force, which brought Mme. de Lafayette to us at le Plessis, of which the advance guard was composed of Mme. de Reaux, aged eighty-four years, of Mme. la Machaut, and other women, all septuagenarians, to whom they had granted the indulgence of a *fiacre*, the others being, according to custom, in a *charette*. It was a long time before they had lodged them all, and we were able to get near enough to speak to them. Finally, I approached my cousin, who had come to a prison where the rules were much less severe than that which she had left. But all the *filles de Paris*, who were assembled there, presented a spectacle so indecent, that a person so pure as she could with difficulty look upon it. She slept in a room where there were four people with whom she was unacquainted. I found the means of obtaining for her (alone) one which she admired, as if it were a palace. She often spoke to me of the pleasure which she found in being alone, though the space between the wall and the bed was so small, that there was not room to put a chair. Being in the neighbourhood of Mme. de Lafayette was agreeable to me; her virtues, and her goodness, her ideas, which she was obliged to hide during the first years of the Revolution, had not changed the possibility of opening my heart to her about my family, concerning which, I had never mentioned my anxiety. . . . She thought, for example, that she had but to defend her cause, and that of her husband, before the Revolutionary Tribunal, and that none were in danger, except such as had wronged, or been unfaithful to the Republic. It took me more than a fortnight to change her ideas, and put her face to face with her true position; as for the rest, that which passed every day before her eyes was more eloquent than my discourses. . . .

"On the 22nd July, the rumour spread through the prison that the 'dames Noailles' had been condemned. I said nothing to Mme. de Lafayette, and searched, and tried to discover the truth, which it was impossible to do. But soon after I read the papers in which it was said that Mme. la Maréchale de Noailles as well as the Duchesse d'Ayen, had been guillotined. There was no question of my dear little sister-in-law (Louise de Noailles). The difficulty of procuring news from the outside was excessive. The ministers of the Terror, trembling for themselves, when I questioned them, replied vaguely. Though I did not doubt this new misfortune, I would not tell Mme. de Lafayette until I had made certain. I always tried to reassure her. Then I paid a gaoler to ascertain for me, and the dreadful surmise became a certain reality. How was I to tell Mme. de Lafayette that she had no longer mother, grandmother, or sister! Finally, there came a moment when she was struck with the embarrassment of those whom she interrogated. She questioned, and my reply was a torrent of tears."—*Notes sur Mes Prisons. Mme. la Duchesse de Duras.*

(See ANTOINE JULES DE NOAILLES, page 63.)

From 1682 until the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, this Duc de Noailles as commander of Languedoc was actively engaged in persecuting the Huguenots. Such persecutions were at that time rife throughout France, yet nowhere were they more severe than in the province governed by Noailles. Ruling, as he did, with an autocratic hand and, no doubt, acting strictly in obedience to the royal commands, he showed little mercy to the offending *religionnaires*. He held them to be not only heretics but rebels and, as such, deserving of every punishment.

Soon after his appointment, he addressed the monarch to this effect:* "It suffices that Your Majesty's orders be known to ensure their immediate execution." Unhappily the bigoted

* *History of the Huguenots*, by W. S. Browning. Paris, 1839. Page 207 *et seq.*

designs of the court rendered this otherwise humane nobleman a minister of wrath to the Huguenots. "However, he punished some Catholics for insulting the Huguenots; and issued a proclamation to enjoin good fellowship."

After an engagement between the Huguenots and royal forces in which the latter were victorious, "thirteen of the prisoners were selected; twelve were hanged at once on the spot, their companion being compelled to act as executioner." What happened to the thirteenth man the historian neglects to record. "This victory was naturally followed by the destruction of several temples . . . None were spared who fell into the hands of the troops." The Duc de Noailles in his letter observes: "These wretches went to the gibbet, with the firm assurance of dying as martyrs; and demanded no other favor than that they might be quickly executed. They begged pardon of the soldiers; but not one of them would ask it of the King."

Shortly before the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, Noailles still commanded in Languedoc "and pursued his missionary career in a similar manner." After relating in his Report the forced conversion of Nismes, Uzès and other towns, he adds: "I am preparing to go through the Cevennes, and hope that, by the end of the month, not a Huguenot will remain."

Such reports not only misled the King, but must have also strongly influenced him toward revoking the Edict. A few days after the Revocation, Madame de Maintenon thus writes: "The King is very well pleased at having completed the great work of bringing the heretics back to the Church." And, in this "great work," the Duc de Noailles played no small part.

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